

Bavarian News

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U.S. Army Garrisons Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Ansbach, Bamberg, Schweinfurt, and Garmisch

June 18, 2008



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Army Family Covenant funds bring more services, programs

by KATIE COWART
Assistant Editor

The Army Family Covenant, signed by U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr senior leaders in November, promised to provide more support to Army Families within the garrison. That support has come in many different forms, all funded by the \$1.4 billion allotted this fiscal year Army-wide.

Signings of the covenant occurred worldwide, addressing Soldier readiness. A large portion of that readiness comes from the Soldier's family, according to Chief of Staff Army Gen. George W. Casey Jr., who said that the Soldiers may be the strength of our nation, but their strength comes from their families.

The Army Family Covenant states:

- We recognize the commitment and increasing sacrifice that our families are making every day.
- We recognize the strength of our Soldiers comes from the strength of their families.
- We are committed to providing Soldiers and families a quality of life that is commensurate with their service.

■ We are committed to providing our families a strong, supportive environment where they can thrive.

■ We are committed to building a partnership with Army Families that enhances their strength and resilience.

■ We are committed to improving family readiness by:

- ◆ Standardizing and funding existing family programs and services
 - ◆ Increasing accessibility and quality of health care
 - ◆ Improving Soldier and family housing
 - ◆ Ensuring excellence in schools, youth services, and child care
 - ◆ Expanding education and employment opportunities for family members

Brig. Gen. David Hogg, Joint Multinational Training Command, explained the need for the resources to decrease the strain on Army Families.

"It is clear to us that the families were the most stretched, and as a result, the most stressed, part of our force and that what we were asking those families was a quantum different than anything I

expected we would ask," he said at the November signing.

One of the major organizations that aids Army Families, the Army Community Services, opened the new Soldier and Family Assistance Center June 12 in Vilseck. The paychecks for the SFAC coordinator and assistants, guidance counselor, and human resources specialist, five positions in total, came from the Army Family Covenant. The SFAC, a service crucial to the Warrior Transition Unit, has seen \$226,000 in funding from Army Family Covenant money.

According to Caroline Mills, ACS director, the SFAC was one of the ACS programs that needed the money the most since it did not exist prior to the Army Family Covenant.

"The Army Family Covenant has heightened public awareness of the value and importance of families," she said. "Services (at ACS in general) will be available more quickly, because additional staff add more responsiveness. Some services (are) also available with more frequency."

See SFAC Page 28

New claims rules ease PCS stress

by MARY MARKOS
Bavarian News

Kelly Smith, a military spouse and Vilseck mother of four, saw Wes Craven's movie "A Nightmare on Elm Street" in her youth. When her household goods were delivered Feb. 13, she had flashbacks of the metal-clawed leather glove the movie's main character, Freddy Krueger, wore.

"My mattress was slashed," she said. "They broke every dresser. They snapped the legs on my dining room chairs. Our Ethan Allen beds were crushed in half... basically, they broke everything. It looked like Freddy Krueger had come with a hack-saw."

Smith's moving nightmare continued as the movers carried more furniture into her third floor apartment.

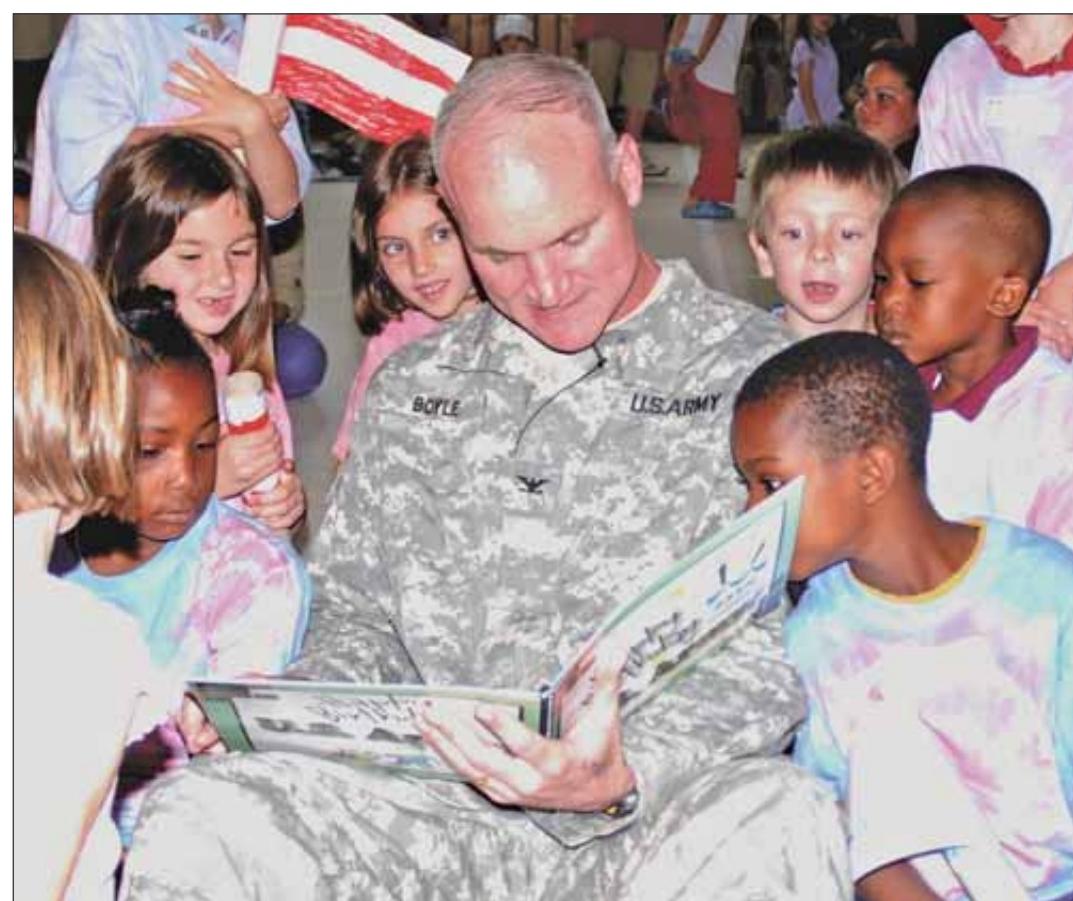
"It was horrific damage, 95 percent of my stuff was broke," she said.

For Smith and approximately 30 others in the Vilseck area this year, moving meant filing claims for damaged items.

Smith filed a claim for \$36,000.

Under the Department of Defense's new full replacement program, she had every item repaired or replaced.

See FULL REPLACEMENT VALUE Page 28



Happy Birthday Army!

U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Commander Col. Brian Boyle reads the Army birthday book to approximately 200 students at the Vilseck School Age Services June 12. For more Army birthday coverage, turn to Page 27.

Photo by Nick D'Amario

Garmisch invites all to join July 4 celebration

by JOHN REESE
USAG Garmisch PAO

All Americans and their guests are invited to come take part in the Fourth of July Independence Day County Fair at Artillery Kaserne, Garmisch.

The event, hosted by U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch, which is in its second year of running since it was reestablished, is bigger and better than

last year's, said Steve Gauthier, Garmisch director of Family Morale, Welfare, and Recreation. Assorted competitions will take place throughout the day.

"This is an old fashioned American-style county fair to include pie baking contests, barbecue style food and beverages, traditional picnic games, live entertainment, softball, and other sports activities," said Gauthier. "This year we have added a chili cook-

off and expanded some of the games."

Two kinds of chili, traditional and maverick, can be entered into the competition. Traditional chili guidelines are the same as the International Chili Society. One of the early entrant teams is led by a retired Army cook and past Installation Management Command champion who competed several times

See GARMISCH Page 28

Schweinfurt Soldier honored by President Bush

Story and photo by CARRIE MCLEROY
Army News Service

Spc. Ross McGinnis was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor by President George W. Bush in a White House ceremony June 2.

His parents, Tom and Romayne McGinnis, shared the small stage in the East Room with the president to receive the nation's highest military honor on their son's behalf. He became the second Soldier serving

in Iraq to receive the medal.

McGinnis was serving as an M-2 50-caliber machine gunner with 1st Platoon, Company C, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment supporting combat operations against insurgents in Adhamiyah, Northeast Baghdad. On Dec. 4, 2006, 1st Plt. was gearing up to patrol the streets of the area and deliver a 250-kilowatt generator to provide increased electricity to its citizens.

The youngest member of his platoon at 19,

McGinnis manned the 50-caliber machine gun on the last Humvee in the six-vehicle patrol. He sat on the gunner's strap facing the rear to provide security for the patrol. An insurgent on a nearby rooftop lobbed a fragmentation grenade into the vehicle. Sgt. 1st Class Cedric Thomas (platoon sergeant and truck commander); Staff Sgt. Ian Newland (squad leader); Sgt. Lyle Buehler (driver) and Spc. Sean Lawson (medic) were combat-locked inside the vehicle.

See MEDAL OF HONOR Page 28

Q&A

What **advice** would you give new **graduates**?



Heather Weflen

(Hohenfels)
"Not to lose focus of your heart's intentions. A lot of times you get lost and forget what your dreams were when you graduated."



Adam Schenck

(Hohenfels)
"Take risks. Things you're unsure about for the future, you can play it safe or go for something unknown. Whether you succeed or not you will be happy you tried, and you'll get farther than the people who played it safe."



Tahirih Fry

(Hohenfels)
"Pursue more education to be better off in this world."



Shalonda Sanders

(Hohenfels)
"Be strong and keep your head up high no matter where you are at. Stay with good influences."



Tony Knight

(Hohenfels)
"Go straight to college. Keep your head on straight. Set goals and stick with it."



C.J. Parks

(Hohenfels)
"Be willing to work for what you want. Your plans may change but as long as you stay focused and willing to work towards your goals, you will get there."



Dale Wolfe

(Hohenfels)
"Start saving now. Even if it is just \$25 a month, start saving now."



Rick Compston

(Hohenfels)
"Further your education or join the military so you can get assistance furthering your education."

Opinion & Editorial

Stay safe this summer and keep in mind grilling tips

Frequency Management

Those of you who read the German periodical "Stern" may have read about frequency management issues in Germany. In January of 2009 many of the frequencies currently in use will be reassigned to other users.

After that reassignment, people who continue to use these frequencies are subject to administrative fines which can be very expensive. The garrison became aware of the problem and contacted the U.S. Army Europe frequency management office.

They were already aware of the issue and are developing contingency plans to both inform the community and provide a way ahead for the entire USAREUR footprint. The plan, which is still in development, identifies the magnitude of the problem (is it just phones, or also electrical devices like baby monitors and microwaves?); educates the population, both those already present and those on orders to come to USAREUR, before they arrive; and intends to provide a means to identify and collect the offending items before a fine is assessed.

The plan also intends to ensure family members are not approached, but identification and resolution will be done through Army command channels. This is a relatively new phenomenon that we are still coming to grips with.



It could potentially have a major impact on our population. Fortunately, we have some time that should allow us to come up with ways to lessen the impact on the community. We will continue to work to identify and solve issues that arise and keep the community informed.

Friendship Club

In an effort to continue to provide things to do in our community, I'd like to highlight the Mantel Friendship Club. The club is a group of Germans and Americans who meet the first Friday of every month at the pizzeria in Mantel.

The whole purpose of the club is to "come out and meet new people while we learn about other cultures; drink a beer, eat a schnitzel, talk. No pressure, no dues, just fun."

Many of the communities around us have similar clubs that offer the same chance to get to know our local German friends. The point of contact for Mantel club is carl.childs@us.army.mil. For those living in other communities, contact the local mayor's office for potential club activities.

Grills Do's and Don'ts

As part of the 101 days of summer safety, let me relate a recent story and enforce the rules and regulations for grilling on our installation. In another community, a grill (on a balcony) was not working well.

The user filled a cup with gasoline and threw it on the grill. It ignited, frightened him, and he dropped the gas can. Gas spilled over the balcony, down the house, and fully engulfed two cars. There was a great deal of

damage to the house and the cars.

As a refresher, here are the rules for grilling and open flames on our installation:

- German law prohibits the use of charcoal grills in a building, garage, or on a balcony
- Grilling is only allowed in established areas

- Don't build open fires anywhere on or off post

- Never leave the grill unattended, and don't build the fire larger than necessary

- Never put lighter fluid or spirits on the lit coals

- Have a bucket with water ready next to the charcoal grill

Extinguish fire or remove or secure the gas or propane container before you leave the area.

The Grafenwoehr Fire Department has responded to nine range fires already this year. We don't need any more business so please pay attention and grill smart.

In closing, we recently hosted a medical town hall in Vilseck. Brig. Gen. Gallagher, the European Regional Medical Command commander, and other senior leaders met with concerned members of the community to address medical issues.

Thanks to Brig. Gen. Gallagher for devoting the time to help understand our issues and concerns and as always thanks again for making this the best place to live and serve in Europe.

Col. Brian T. Boyle
Commander, U.S. Army
Garrison Grafenwoehr

Military teaches kids duty, honor



JACEY ECKHART
On the Homefront

**" Money (is) not a big motivator for military brats.
People don't go into the military to make money... "**

impressed me too. I'd also read figures from the Department of Defense that said up to 50 percent of all military kids consider the military as a career for themselves. So I sat back and watched while she filled out applications and drove herself to interviews and attended functions and talked to a recruiter.

Then this month she changed her mind. Just like that.

One night while we were busy praying for her poor recruiter and his ulcer, she came in and threw herself down on our bed.

"I don't want to join the Navy," she confessed. "But I'm afraid if I don't join the military I won't be anything worthwhile."

Both of you work in the military and you love them. You think they are the best people in the world. I don't want to be less than that."

My husband and I sat there in our pajamas and gaped at her. Was that what she learned being raised in our house? That the ONLY life worth living is one in which the military figures prominently?

That surely wasn't our intention. We didn't line up our kids for inspection every morning. We didn't teach them to recognize a sergeant at 300 paces or to identify aircraft in the sky. We didn't march them to school in combat boots. So how did she pick up that kind of a message when we didn't teach it to her?

Naughty Or Nice?

What do you think?

Good or Bad, We Want to Hear from You!

Fill out a comment card and drop it in the mail, or send us an on-line comment at <https://ice.disa.mil> or look for the ICE link on the US Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Web site at www.grafenwoehr.army.mil.

Bavarian News

Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Ansbach, Bamberg, Schweinfurt, and Garmisch

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GMS closes after two years

Story and photo by MARY MARKOS

Bavarian News

Students huddled over brightly colored yearbooks, collecting signatures and recalling memories of days spent in a temporary school that became a home to 480 students and the staff of Grafenwoehr Middle School.

With teachers, students, and community members present, the school retired their flag and closed their doors June 6.

"It's been a very exciting chapter," said Mary Zimmerman-Bayer, principal of the school during its two-year history.

"It has been a real haven for the kids," she said. "It has been great academics with lots of learning, lots of fun. It's funny, but I think they're going to miss the campus and openness- the parts that they initially said they didn't like. It was more like a little mini college campus."

The temporary campus closed as students prepare to attend Netzberg Middle School in August.

Zimmerman-Bayer added that although students will no longer be called panthers, or shout their panther pride, they will take a sense of camaraderie and unity as they transition into Netzberg Knights.

"The best part is there is a great community of our students that are moving up the hill," Zimmerman-Bayer said. "They know what's right, and they know how things are done... the facility is magnificent, state of the art. It was worth waiting for."

The new facility, she added, will serve as a foundation for family and community life.

"The school should be the center of that community. That's the way it was designed, with the humanity wing for the arts and theatre, and all the sports fields. The school should be the center and rightfully so, because the students and



Students of Grafenwoehr Middle School bid an emotional farewell to the school June 6.

families can celebrate there," she said.

An expected 600 students will walk the halls of the new school when it opens Aug. 27, a big jump from the 240 that opened GMS. The school will also bring an additional 15 staff members.

As Zimmerman-Bayer prepares for her new duty location in England, she credits the students for the success of the school.

"(The students) have a sense of purpose. They know what their expectations are. We really stretched and raised the bar... and they rose to the challenge. That was really exciting," she said.

Zimmerman-Bayer said she was also for the Terra Nova test results the school received.

"I think our scores that we received this year for Terra Nova speak for them themselves. Most schools are happy if they get scores of 50. Ours are 60ish across the board. To make that much progress and have this many kids coming and going, it has been outstanding," she said.

GMS school memorabilia will be displayed at the Grafenwoehr museum, allowing the school to live on, much like it will in the hearts of the students, Zimmerman-Bayer said.

Grafenwoehr CSM Burns leaves legacy

by NICK D'AMARIO
USAG Grafenwoehr CI Chief

Command Sgt. Maj. John. M. Burns wrapped up 29 years of service to his country by spending the last four years as U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr's top enlisted Soldier. In those four years, Burns had significant impact on the garrison's transformation into one of the best Army installations in Europe.

A native of Frontenac, Kan., Burns shared his entire military experience with Geri, his spouse of nearly 30 years, who he said "I have always made my career decisions with; she has always been a supporter to me and the Burns' family."

In turn, Burns was the garrison's rock since his arrival in July 2004.

When the garrison experienced the initial full-scale movement of 2d Stryker Cavalry Regiment into Rose Barracks which involved a mega influx of Soldiers and families in a very compressed period of time, Burns worked continuously with

2d SCR's Lt. Col. Omar Jones, along with many other Soldiers and civilians, to make it happen.

When it was time to "ensure (the) garrison had enough barracks space, because adequate housing for single Soldiers has always been one of my top priorities," Burns became that go-to person.

When it came to raising the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program to new, unprecedented heights, Burns set the cornerstone by enlisting Spc. Johnathan Maki, the program's president, in January 2007 to provide Soldiers with the opportunity to enjoy events and activities centric to their interests.

"Command Sgt. Maj. Burns was a huge supporter of BOSS, and the USAG Grafenwoehr program would not be what it is today without the great command support that we received from him," said Maki.

"As the senior military advisor for BOSS, he always made time to help out in any way that he could. He will be missed dearly within the BOSS

community," he added.

Burns was typically behind-the-scenes in many garrison initiatives, including nearly every aspect of installation planning for USAG Grafenwoehr's future.

He was involved in the full spectrum of installation cleanliness, including recycling, and was a principal advocate of safety for Soldiers and family members – and was passionate about helmet and skateboarding safety.

Burns' change of responsibility and retirement ceremony May 8 in Grafenwoehr paid tribute to a Soldier dedicated to providing quality support to Soldiers, families, and civilians. At that ceremony, he was awarded the Legion of Merit as a further addendum to the plethora of decorations he has received during his career.

His replacement, Command Sgt. Maj. William Berrios, a native of Orocovis, Puerto Rico, said he will keep many of Burns' initiatives going during his tenure.

See BURNS Page 28

Spotlight on Education



Name: Ed Lynch

What grade and subject do you teach? High school algebra and discrete math

Hometown: Baltimore, Md.

How long have you been a teacher? This is my 34th year, I have been with DoDDs for 20 years.

What do you enjoy most about teaching? I was in the superintendent's office for ten years and wanted to return to the classroom because of the active process that goes on with the students. I have a behavioral science background so I am interested in why people learn the way they do. Especially in math, there is never one path to the correct answer, but many.

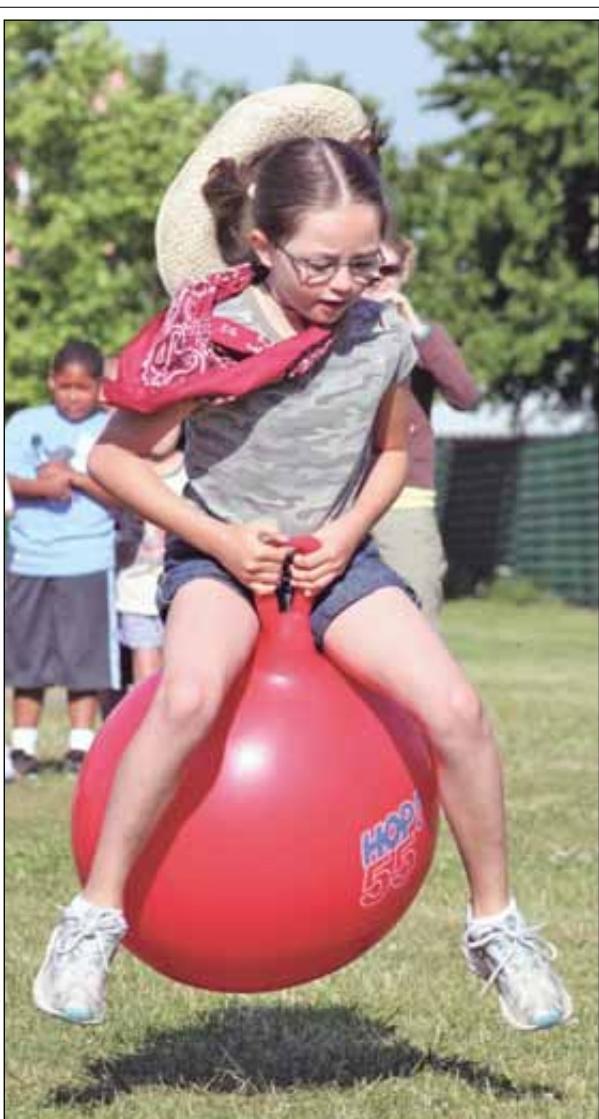
What advice can you give students to help them succeed in school?

They need to learn to fish on their own. Instead of always demanding the teacher put bait on the hook, they need to pick up the bait on their own. The business world demands focused independence, not dependence. And take as many math and science classes as you can; the money is in math and science.

JUMP FOR JOY

Grafenwoehr Elementary School hosted their field day June 6. The day gave students a chance to get outside and enjoy the sun and physical activity.

Photo by Mary Markos



Vilseck Class of 2008 Graduation



Vilseck graduate Raymond Letourneau accepts his diploma from Vilseck High School principal Dwayne Werner and Dr. Paula Peterson.

VHS graduated 62 seniors at the commencement ceremony June 6 held in the new VHS gymnasium. Speeches were given by valedictorian Katherine Schaffer and co-salutatorians Lemuel Lee and Larisa Chavez.

Deployed parents watched their child graduate via live Web cast.

Photo by Katie Cowart

Garrison signs partnership with Weiden

Story and photo by KIM GILLESPIE
USAG Grafenwoehr PAO

The U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Commander Col. Brian Boyle and city of Weiden Lord Mayor Kurt Seggewiss signed the first official partnership between the garrison and a host nation city May 28.

"As the garrison commander, it is one of my goals to invite our Soldiers to get out and get to know the towns they live in and meet their German neighbors," Boyle said.

"With our partnership, we'd like to provide these efforts with an official framework, but more importantly expand our activities beyond meetings at the leadership level but instead, setting the stage for organizational partnerships and personal friendships at the grassroots level," he continued.

Members of both communities can expect to see more contact through sports, school activities, and other local events, according to Boyle.

"A good example will be our planned neighbor's week in September. For one week there will be activities that will bring the citizens of Weiden together with their neighbors," said Seggewiss.

"On one hand will be our Czech neighbors based on the neighborhood of four countries but on the other hand will also be the American Soldiers and their families who live right here

among us," Seggewiss said.

Seggewiss was referring to the Czech city of Marienbad, which also has a partnership agreement with Weiden.

Seggewiss noted that a total of 8,200 Soldiers are stationed in Grafenwoehr and Vilseck, and this number is expected to rise to 10,000 Soldiers with approximately 13,000 to 14,000 family members by 2010.

"These families not only live in their housing areas but also right among us. In Weiden alone, 96 families have their home," Seggewiss said.

According to Boyle, Weiden is the largest nearby city and the 172nd Infantry Brigade, which is moving to Grafenwoehr, is already familiar with Weiden.

Many of its Soldiers and their families may end up living there and a vehicle such as the partnership agreement helps the garrison with promoting events and activities offered in Weiden, Boyle said.

Brigitte Brunner, Government President of the Upper Palatinate district of Bavaria, to which Grafenwoehr and Weiden belong, also participated in the partnership signing and summarized the event:

"May by this partnership your Upper Palatinatal Americans' lives develop in a comfortable manner and the Upper Palatininate and the city of Weiden become your second home," she said.



USAG Grafenwoehr Commander Col. Brian Boyle and city of Weiden Lord Mayor Kurt Seggewiss signed a partnership agreement May 28. The partnership is aimed at helping American families get to know this host nation city a little bit better, and help the Weiden citizens understand what their American counterparts are experiencing.

NCO Academy commandant inspired by troops

Story and photo by MARY MARKOS
Bavarian News

The Grafenwoehr Physical Fitness Center echoed with the sound of the noncommissioned officer creed today as more than 430 students graduated from Warrior Leader Course class 06-08.

The Soldiers endured 31 days of intense training in warrior tasks and drills that transformed them into leaders.

Leading the troops stood Command Sgt. Maj. Hu B. Rhodes.

Rhodes, with more than 24 years of service, took command of the 7th Army NCO Academy last month, becoming the 30th commandant in the school's 59-year history.

Prior to moving to Grafenwoehr, Rhodes, a single father of six-year old Cynthia and former Army Ranger instructor, served as the sergeant major for the Officer Candidate School in Ft. Benning, Ga.

Both schools serve as the basis for Army leadership.

His experiences at Ft. Benning and



Command Sgt. Maj. Hu Rhodes conducts an inspection of an NCO Academy student's room.

here, he said, motivates him, as he is inspired by the energy and enthusiasm of young troops.

"I think, maybe not all, but most senior NCOs take power from young

Soldiers... Already I've enjoyed that," he said.

For Rhodes and the roughly 100 cadre serving as mentors and instructors, the focus lies on the basics

and forming a strong foundation on which Soldiers can build.

"Fifteen years from now, 10 years from now... the thing that's going to carry the fight for the United States Army is the basics," Rhodes said.

"Taking care of your Soldiers is not a new thing; the idea of taking responsibility for your decisions is not a new thing; the idea of knowing how to project combat power is not a new thing. A Soldier's ability to do their job on the basic level is probably what will make a difference in their career. Warrior Leaders Course is basic skills."

Arming young Soldiers with basic skills and the ability to lead, he said, is what gives the U.S. Army NCO Corps an edge.

"I have traveled on and off of different battlefields," he said. "I think the difference on the battlefield is the NCO. They are empowered to be better than anybody else's NCO Corps."

Rhodes also empowers his cadre and Soldiers.

"One of the things that I work on

is the notion of Army smart," he said. "The Army talks about being 'Army Strong'... and we are. Sometimes we do not push ourselves to be Army smart."

"Army smart is empowering the people on the team to be part of the decision making process. You can't just ask for their decision, you have to utilize their input. As with 'Army Strong,' there is not one element that has a foothold on the battlefield, we all have to work together," he said.

The approximately 3,500 students expected to graduate from the Academy this year have the opportunity to train with more than 120 soldiers from 20 foreign armies.

The interaction, Rhodes said, develops an understanding and appreciation for one another.

"It brings cultural awareness," he said. "It will play benefit somewhere in a Soldier's career."

Rhodes said his career has benefited from working with superior Soldiers, and the Academy has many.

"I am rich on quality people," he said.

405th AFSB changes command



The 2nd Battalion, 405th Army Field Support Brigade in Vilseck conducted a change of command June 9. Lt. Col. Jordan Chroman passed command to Lt. Col. Morris Hatcher. Hatcher is coming from U.S. South Command in Miami, Fla., and Chroman is continuing on to the Office of the Congressional Legislative Liaison at the Pentagon.

Photo by Katie Cowart

Vilseck community gathers to remember fallen Stryker

Story and photo by MARY MARKOS
Bavarian News

Gunfire shattered the silence June 6 at the Rose Barracks Chapel in Vilseck as the 2d Stryker Cavalry Regiment gave a final salute to a Soldier who died in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Cpl. Justin Ray Mixon, 22, 1st Squadron, enlisted in the Army in 2005.

"By all accounts of his peers and leaders, Cpl. Mixon was one of our nations very best," said Lt. Col. Thomas Rickard, regimental rear detachment commander.

"Because of Cpl. Mixon and Soldiers like him," Rickard added, "Iraq women, who have never voted, now cast ballots with confidence. A dictator has been terminated, and this fall, we will see the first provincial democratic elections in Iraqi history."

Rickard spoke of Mixon's character and courage, and the courage of Mixon's wife, Tia.

"There is another kind of courage, equally impressive, that a spouse must have to love and support a Soldier. It takes a big heart and true grit to marry a Soldier fully knowing the hazards of our chosen profession, and support that Soldier during a deployment," Rickard said.

Lt. Col. Daniel Barnett, 1st Squadron commander, said Mixon was "constantly chattering in the Stryker and constantly talking



Mixon

to his platoon mates." Often, he added, the conversation was about his wife and son, and his home state Louisiana.

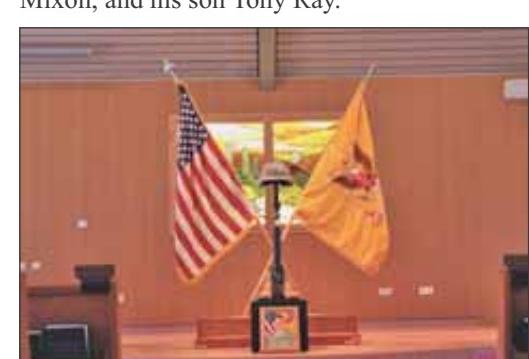
A Stryker driver, Mixon died June 1 when the enemy attacked his vehicle with a roadside bomb on the outskirts of Sauber City, Iraq. He paid the ultimate sacrifice, Barnett said, with a love for his friends.

"He did his job without fear. He did his job without fear to support his friends he cared so deeply about; his friends that were riding behind him... they relied on him..."

Barnett added that Mixon was so committed to his friends that he would give the shirt off his back to support a friend in need.

"Everyone that served with him will somehow be a better person because they shared life with him," he said.

Mixon is survived by his wife Tia Marie Mixon, and his son Tony Ray.



Cpl. Justin Ray Mixon was remembered at a memorial ceremony June 6 in Vilseck.

Motorcycle safety course keeps even experienced riders out of harm's way

Story and photo by JOHN REESE
USAG Garmisch PAO

Rain clouds, seven bikers, four Harleys, two Yamahas, and one BMW converged on Artillery Kaserne May 30 for the garrison's first Motorcycle Safety Foundation Experienced Rider Course of the year.

Under the tutelage of MSF rider-coach Alexander Ege, the bikers began a race with an ominous storm front to complete the lessons and earn the privilege of riding on two wheels.

Ege explained an exercise, demonstrated it on his BMW, and with hand signals similar to those used on a flight line, directed the students what to do before, during and after the exercise.

The international class was comprised of one NATO School Norwegian lieutenant colonel, one British contractor, a U.S. Army captain and helicopter pilot from Ansbach, two U.S. civilians from Munich, and one American U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch civilian. Ege, the German rider-coach, rode in from Stuttgart.

With four nationalities represented, the common grounds that built camaraderie during the training were a love of motorcycling and serving with or for the United States. Some of the class had served in Afghanistan or Iraq. Anecdotes were traded about adventures in the military or on two wheels.

Before the class could begin, the riders had to conduct a tires and wheels, controls, lights, oil, chassis, and stand inspection of each other's bikes.

A failure on any of these meant no class, period, with the further possibility of redlining the bike on the



Rider-Coach Alexander Ege evaluates an emergency quick-stop by Lt. Col. Egil Haave, Norwegian Defense Forces.

spot if it was deemed too dangerous to ride. Ege checked everyone for the required personal protective equipment.

The mandatory MSF training was taught on a specially painted hardtop range normally used as a parking lot at the back of the kaserne. In Installation Management Command Europe, a biker must undergo a mixture of theory, discussion, and actual riding

skills every three years.

At the least, all Soldier bikers must take the Basic Rider Course no matter where they ride, on or off post. When taking the class, the range becomes the student's place of duty for the day. The more advanced ERC is limited to six riders who've been in the saddle long enough to acquire superior road skills.

There are a couple of things that

and cosmetic scrapes and dents.

The motorcycle weather gods were teasing but ultimately kind. It was already a hot day with occasional strong gusts of wind that added challenge to the exercises.

Scattered warm raindrops the size of grapes wet the range just after the riders completed one of the test maneuvers most likely to cause a slip—the accident avoidance swerve.

In this test riders approach a set of cones at about 30mph before a hard swerve to avoid a simulated obstacle, and then hitting the brakes, downshifting, and coming to a complete stop.

A break in the clouds helped dry the range and dramatically increased the humidity before the next difficult test, emergency braking in a curve.

In the final test, emergency breaking, riders approach a stopping point at about 30mph before hitting the brakes hard to stop within a specified distance.

In each of the tests, points are tallied up for errors. Weak execution of the drill like going beyond the painted lanes, running over a cone, or putting a foot down during the slow speed double U-turn test were added up. The riders also had to complete a written test of 25 questions based on the theoretical discussions.

Interestingly, a Munich biker riding a long, custom orange Harley V Rod that was the hardest motorcycle to handle of any in the class got the best overall score.

At the end of the day the six veteran road warriors finished the training without a hitch. Experience and a good instructor saw everyone pass with high scores.

Edelweiss hosts 2008 Soldier Show



Photo courtesy of Edelweiss Lodge and Resort

The 2008 Soldier Show performed live in the General Patton Ballroom at the Edelweiss Lodge and Resort May 24. Guests were entertained with song, dance, and special effect lighting that gave the show a broadway appeal.

Guests of the Edelweiss Resort also enjoyed many special activities to help celebrate the long weekend. Slot car racing was popular among the kids, along with supervised activities and outdoor play castle and obstacle course. Along with the Soldier Show, a DJ with light show performed in the lower lobby Zuggy's Base Camp for those looking for evening entertainment.

Rooms are still available at the Edelweiss Lodge and Resort from July 7 - 20. With summer in full effect, there is a lot of everything for everyone to do while on vacation. White water rafting, biking, hiking, sightseeing, swimming, and of course the number one activity to do while on vacation, nothing at all but relaxing.

For reservations, please visit www.edelweisslodgeandresort.com or call our Vacation Planning Center Monday - Friday at CIV 08821-9440.

Marshall Center organizes Berlin conference on security



Photo by Master Sgt. Mark Winkler, Bundeswehr

German Minister of State Gernot Erler delivers the keynote address at the Black Sea Security Policy conference June 3 in Berlin.

The three-day conference, organized by the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies and the German Federal Foreign Office, brought together about 60 parliamentarians and government officials from the Black Sea area, a region of increasing importance to western Europe since the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the European Union in January 2007.

In a series of panel discussions and working groups, participants examined common security issues, such as energy security, organized crime and illegal immigration, the current state of regional and multilateral security cooperation, and possible strategies for furthering security and stability in the region.

Dirk Bremgmann, head of the Defense and Security Division of the Federal Foreign Office, and James Q. Roberts, U.S. deputy director of the Marshall Center, opened the conference.

"WE WALK BY FAITH..."

II Corinthians 5:7



A woman was brought from the hospital in Lourdes to the grotto to say her final prayers or receive a miracle.

The sick from all over the world make their way to Lourdes, France, to worship, ask for improved health, drink and bathe in healing waters, and pray for a miracle.

They are joined by others who come to the town and its basilica in a pilgrimage to refresh their spirit and religious beliefs.



The Virgin Mary asked Bernadette; "Go to the priest and tell them to make a church for worship." Now 150 years later, that little church that was requested by the Virgin is the Basilica, which was built above the Grotto where the Virgin Mary appeared to Bernadette Soubirous in 1858.



Above, U.S. Army Europe bandmaster Maj. Andrew J. Esch, Commander and Conductor, leads a concert at the outdoor "Village des Artisans de Paix" in the Lourdes city center.

Military bands from several nations provided musical performances during the three days of religious gatherings.

The music gave an appropriate background to the attitudes of prayer and reflection during the pilgrimage.

At left, Sgt. Shauntel Straws, soloist performer in the USAREUR band and chorus, entertains a wide audience with songs from Frank Sanatra.

The band is part of the 529th Military Police Company out of Heidelberg.



Story and photos by
PAULA J. GUZMAN
Special to the Bavarian News

This year marked the 50th International Military Pilgrimage, an annual event that began in 1957, took place May 22-25 in Lourdes, France. Citizens from countries from all over the world made their way to the modest city near the Spanish border in search of a personal message or miracle.

Over 200 U.S. Army Europe Soldiers and their family members joined the lengthy trip, including the USAREUR band and chorus, making a first-time appearance at the site.

The History

The city of Lourdes gained religious fame after 1858 when a poor village girl first saw an apparition of the Virgin Mary in the Massabielle Grotto on the outskirts of the town.

Plagued with asthma and later emphysema, Bernadette Soubirous saw the first apparition when sent out to gather fire wood with her sister and friend.

The other girls did not believe Bernadette's vision, but she was not shaken in her faith and returned 17 additional times against her parents, priest, and officials' wishes, seeing the Virgin Mary each time.

She relayed messages received from the Virgin Mary, such as instruction to build a church, where

the Rosary Basilica now stands within the city.

The instructions, however, were not believed until miracles started to occur when one of Bernadette's instructions was to dig in the earth and eat the bitter grass.

A spring arose from the spot where she dug. A man pronounced completely blind by physicians washed his face in this new spring and miraculously received his sight back.

At this point the townspeople started to believe Bernadette's reports.

Since that time, the grotto and most of the surrounding area has been viewed as holy ground.

A Single Drop of Water

Beth VanSlyke, a teacher from Las Vegas, attended the pilgrimage this year.

"The care and love of those working in the baths is humbling. Lourdes is a humbling experience! The workers remind you gently of why you

are there and how fortunate you are to be experiencing Lourdes," she said. "I cried several times from joy and the humility of being in Lourdes."

Many pilgrims thought the experience evoked an equally emotional response. Beatriz Orta, a

1st Squadron, 2d Stryker Cavalry Regiment spouse, was one of those.

"I saw so

much. Much

of it moved me

to the point of

tears; as well

as realizing

that I was such

a little drop

of water in the

immense ocean

of people."

"And water

was an element

that tested our

faith to the very end,

through the baths, the river, and the

rain. But the faith of the

pilgrims and the

assurance of spiritual

healing was ever

present everywhere

**[T]he faith of the
pilgrims and the
assurance of spiritual
healing was ever
present everywhere**

you went.

Beatriz Orta

1-2SCR spouse

and I'm absolutely looking forward to next year's pilgrimage, with my church family, new friends and the old ones too. My expectations were surely met and now I know, that it was more than I had expected," Orta said.

The events held over the three-day period included a mass for all American Armed Forces members and their families, the international English-speaking mass in the grotto, the candlelit procession, and visits to the "Village des Artisans de Paix" in the city center with many different activities.

Pilgrims were also given the chance to bathe in the water near the grotto and walk the Stations of the Cross.

Army Strong

While being a primarily religious experience, Soldiers also enjoyed the camaraderie of fellow Soldiers of the faith. Master Sgt. Christopher Curtis, a Reserve Component Career Counselor for Grafenwoehr, Vilseck, and Hohenfels, was one of those Soldiers.

"When together, I felt the Army's presence was one of pride and tradition; our troops and the American flag were cheered and saluted when the band, color guard, and the troops were in a single unit," Curtis said.

Soldiers and family members returned home feeling rejuvenated and encouraged in their beliefs, and "lucky," according to VanSlyke, for having had the opportunity to visit and worship on a holy site.



Pilgrims from around the world wash, bathe, drink and bless themselves with the water that flows from the springs in Lourdes. Several visitors purchase bottles and fill them up to carry home.

On the ninth visit to the Grotto, the Virgin Mary told Bernadette to "drink from the fountain and bathe in it." There was no fountain, but Bernadette, not knowing how else to obey, began to scratch in the gravel. A bubbling pool rose in the hollow she dug; by the following day, it had become a full stream.



"I wish that this place be a place for pilgrimage," the Immaculate Virgin said to Bernadette. The candlelit procession is one of faith and light. It attempts to stress to the Christian pilgrim the meaning of their own baptism, and to recreate the journey of every believer toward God together with his brothers in the same faith, truth, and love, as related in the book of Lourdes.



Christian military Communities from around the world (mostly Catholic) pray at each of the Stations of the Cross. Many of the pilgrims do the stations without their shoes. They do this to ask the Lord for forgiveness of their sins that they have committed throughout the past year. The punishment for doing the stations barefoot is that the path is made of jagged rocks and all up hill.

Vandal relinquishes JMRC command

by KRISTIN BRADLEY

Bavarian News

When Col. Thomas Vandal arrived in 2005, Hohenfels was still known as the Combat Maneuver Training Center and U.S. Army Europe was about to undergo its biggest transformation since World War II.

During his three years of leadership, Hohenfels evolved from the CMTC into the Joint Multinational Readiness Center. A year after that transition, the Department of the Army designated the JMRC as the Army's "Center of Excellence" for coalition training.

The capabilities in the training area have also improved during the commander of operations group's tenure, including reconstituting live fires in the training area after a 13-year moratorium, and a three-year project to update the training area. The project resulted in two new military operations on urbanized terrain sites and a highway complex.

Vandal listed these and other accomplishments during his farewell ceremony May 30.

"I have highlighted some of these accomplishments to point out that all of this transformation was accomplished as a result of the Herculean effort of the supremely dedicated Soldiers, noncommissioned officers, and officers assigned to the JMRC," he said.

"There has been an unbelievable transformation at this training facility and he's been the driving force for it," said Brig. Gen. David Hogg, commanding general of the 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command at Grafenwoehr.

Hogg said that three years ago when Vandal took command, most of the Combat Training Centers, including JMRC, were still caught in a Cold War mentality, not yet having transitioned to training appropriately for the current operating environments in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"We have three dirt ("boots on ground", not simulated) training centers in our Army. This is one of them. It is the smallest and least manned of the other two training centers, but does the most of all the training centers if you look at bang for the buck," said Hogg.

Command Sgt. Maj. Jose Santos, JMRC's command sergeant major, agrees that Vandal was a large part of the successful transformation of Hohenfels from the CMTC to the JMRC.

"Col. Vandal had a vision and everyone supported his vision because it was about training Soldiers, taking care of families, and mentoring his subordinates," said Santos.

Hogg echoed those sentiments.

"If you want a guy that can make change happen, that can take a big ship and change the direction of a big ship, which is what JMRC is, Tom Vandal would be the guy to man that boat," said Hogg.

Though his boss is more than happy with the job he has done, Vandal acknowledges that there were challenges when he first took command, including getting the multinational training started.

"I visited many of the defense attachés and Offices of Defense Cooperation in the Eastern European countries soliciting their participation in U.S. Brigade Combat Team training at Hohenfels. There were many regulations that



were developed during the Cold War that needed to be worked through initially," he said.

Of all the things he has accomplished in the last three years, Vandal said he is most proud of the "challenging, realistic training" that the observer/controllers provide at JMRC for troops preparing for combat.

If he had more time as JMRC's commander, Vandal said he would like to see "the transformation of 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry to a combined arms battalion consisting of two M1 Abrams tank companies and two Bradley Infantry fighting vehicle companies." He said that plan has been conceptually approved by the USAREUR commanding general, but there are still many details that need to be worked out.

Though he won't be here to meet the next set

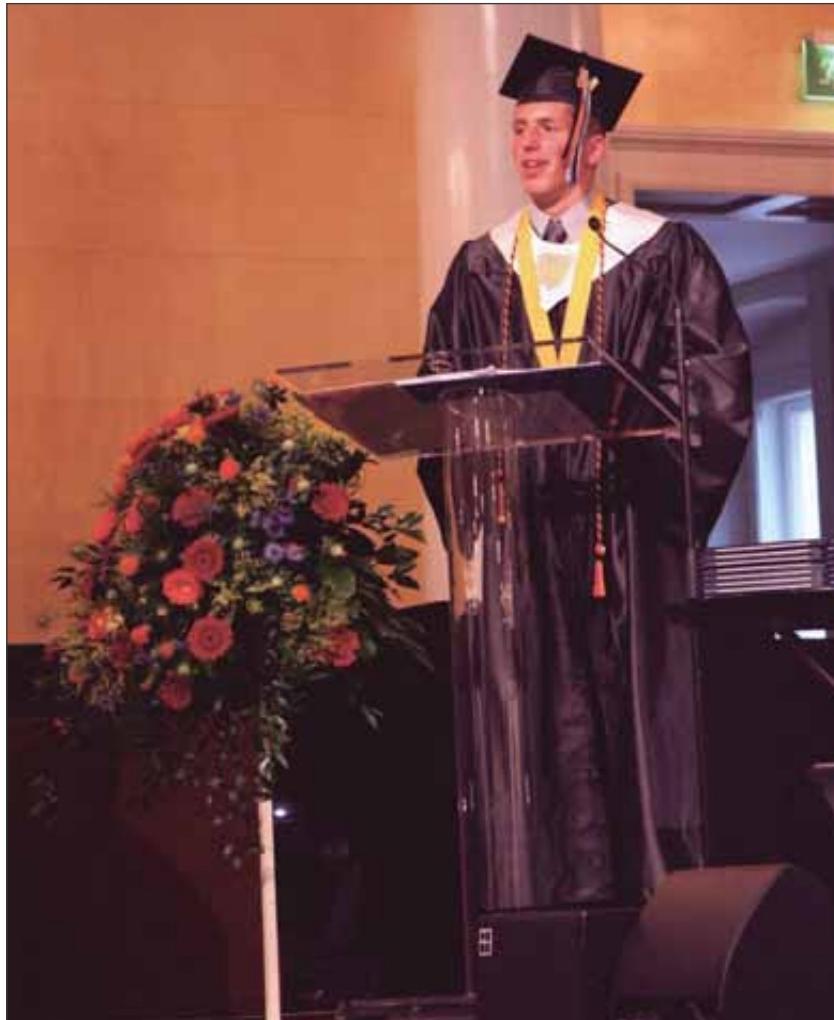
of challenges JMRC will face, Vandal has some advice for his successor to help him keep up the tradition of excellence JMRC has enjoyed.

"Three things: trust your subordinates and allow them the initiative to help develop the required training as we have an exceptionally experienced and qualified operations group. Try to improve your foxhole every day; strive to improve something in training, the box, or the community every day. Live the Army values and be a role model for our community," Vandal said.

Vandal will be practicing those values next at Fort Stewart, Ga.

Col. Pressler, the incoming commander, is expected to arrive in October. Until his arrival, Lt. Col. Timothy DeLass, JMRC deputy commander, will assume command.

Presenting the Class of 2008!

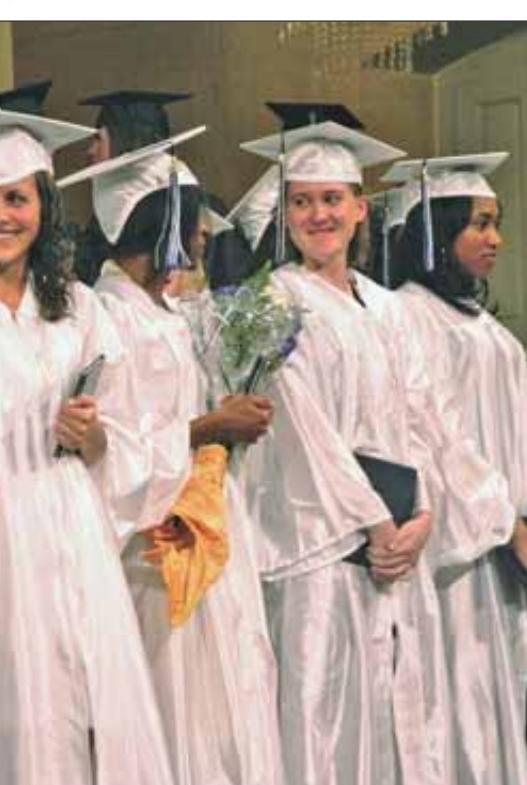


Stephan Vandal addressed his fellow classmates during his valedictorian speech, an honor which he says has become a tradition in his family.

Vandal finished his high school career as his family prepares to move due to reassignment of his father, former Joint Multinational Readiness Center commander Col. Thomas Vandal.

For many students, Hohenfels was not the only school they attended for the past four years, but it has grown to be an important part of their high school experience.

One student moved before the year was over, but faculty arranged for him to come back and graduate with the class from Hohenfels.



Students beam at each other after finally moving their tassels from the left to the right side of their caps.

The graduates waited to complete this symbolic act after all had received their diplomas, transferring their tassels all together.

Safety office offers tips on '101 Days of Summer' campaign

by KRISTIN BRADLEY
Bavarian News

During the 101 days between Memorial Day and Labor Day, most children are out of school and most service members and civilians take leave to enjoy the nice weather and all the activities it brings. However, the 101 days of summer are also a time of increased safety risks on the roads, near the water, and around the house.

According to the U.S. Army Combat Readiness and Safety Center's "101 Critical Days of Summer" campaign, "Memorial Day through Labor Day marks the critical days when accidents and mishaps pose a greater risk to Soldiers and their families."

Motor vehicle accidents, a focus of Army safety programs year round, are of special concern during the warmer months. During summer, travelers mean increased traffic on the roads, and more frequent festivals and sporting events make it easy to forget that enjoying the season also means taking extra precautions to stay safe.

According to a message sent by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, 77 service members died in private motor vehicle accidents last year between Memorial and Labor Day. Soldiers and civilians alike are reminded to plan ahead before attending events: make sure you have a designated driver, and that driver will not be too tired to responsibly drive home when the time comes.

Dan Voglesong, garrison safety manager, recommends everyone keep the number of the Hohenfels emergency taxi ride home program available when they travel within the area. If someone finds himself without a responsible ride home or money for a taxi, he may call the garrison Installation Operation Command at CIV 09472-83-2819. The IOC then calls the individual a taxi that will take him home and receive payment from

the IOC; payment is refunded by the user by the next pay day.

Drivers that find themselves without a ride home are not the only POV related safety concern that summer can bring. As the weather warms up, motorcyclists begin to take the roads again, and Marty Angell, point of contact for garrison motorcycle safety, wants to remind riders they have special safety concerns.

His top tips for summer riding include remembering that other vehicles on the road may not be looking out for motorcycles, making defensive driving crucial.

"If approaching an intersection where an oncoming vehicle is signaling left, prepare to avoid that vehicle when they turn left in front of you. It is better to go slow around a curve than too fast. And do not buy a sport bike as your first motorcycle. If you have already done so, immediately go to a racing school to learn how to handle your motorcycle," said Angell.

Summer not only brings more people onto the roads, it also brings people close to many different sources of water, including pools, lakes, oceans, and rivers. According to Voglesong, lakes, rivers, and rock quarries are not usually approved by U.S. Army Europe as safe spots to swim. Most pools are approved, but users must remember that lifeguards are not as common in Germany as they are in the U.S., so parents must supervise their children at all times. Like other summer activities, swimming and alcohol should never be mixed.

Traveling, swimming, and riding all require special safety considerations. Other outdoor activities such as hiking and barbecuing require special precautions as well. Visit www.crc.army.mil for help staying safe during these and other activities, as well as for more information on the 101 Days of Summer campaign.

Check out the Hohenfels High School senior page in the May 21 issue! Log on to www.milcom.de to see our archives.

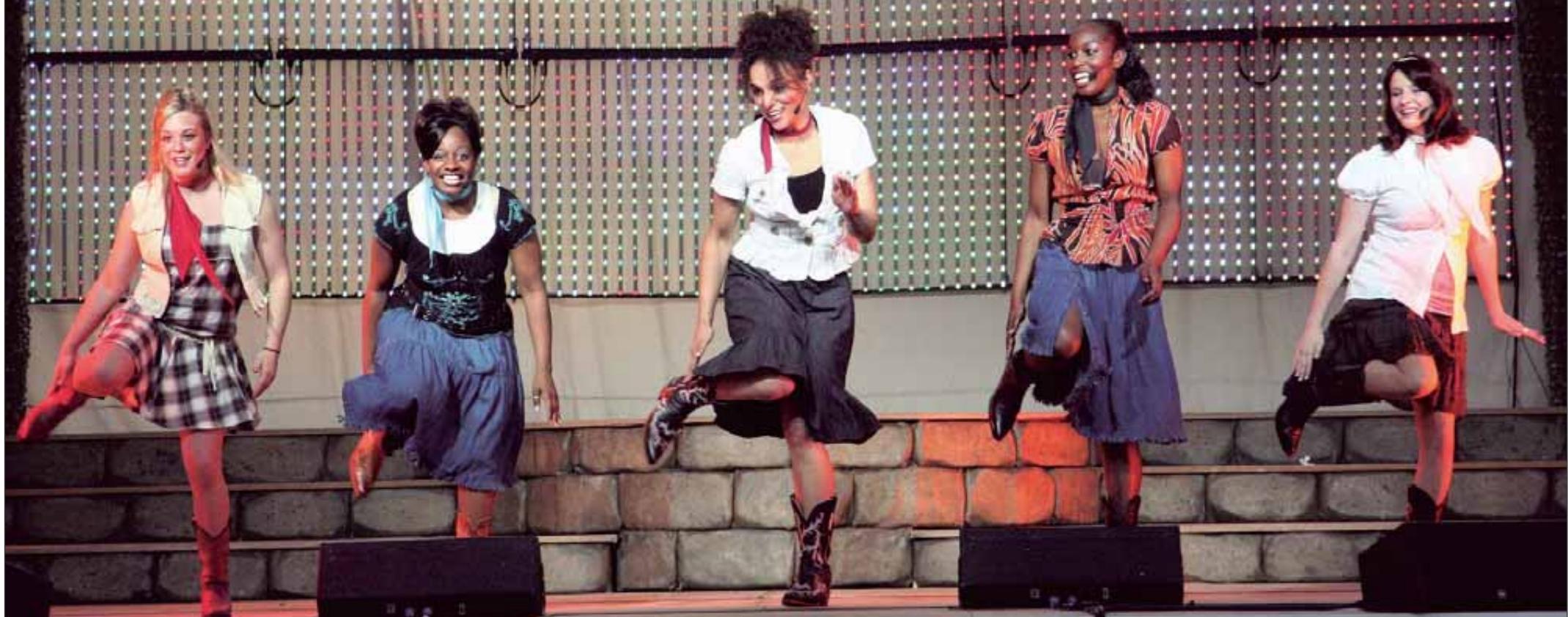


Photo by Troy Darr

Soldiers brought a diverse range of talents to Hohenfels for the U.S. Army Soldier Show June 5. The show embarked April 24 on a seven-month tour of about 100 performances on military installations across the United States, Germany, Belgium, and Italy. The international portion of the tour consumed most of May and early June.

Soldier Show celebrates silver anniversary

by TIM HIPPS
FMWRC Public Affairs

The cast and crew emphasized their working motto of "entertainment for the Soldier, by the Soldier" in a simulated deployed setting celebrating the 25th anniversary of the modern U.S. Army Soldier Show, which came to Hohenfels June 5.

"The impression we want the audience to get is that they've been transported to the Middle East to a combat area," said Tim Higdon, Soldier Show director.

"The printed program has a smart book or field manual layout, which goes back to the Soldier aspect of the show's mission," Higdon said. "The goal is to give the sense that we are watching the Soldiers return from a mission, who then take the time to put on a show for the audience."

In the end, troops donned their battle gear as they exited the stage.

"Just to drive home that they start the show as Soldiers and they leave the show the same way, as Soldiers – to do what their mission in life is," said Higdon, a 1988 Soldier Show performer.

Nearly half of the cast and crew have already deployed during the War on Terror, so they know the drill. Just getting an opportunity to perform on a seven-month tour of entertaining Soldiers and military Families fulfills a lifelong dream for most of them.

Aspiring Soldiers worldwide submit application packages that include videotapes,

biographies, photographs, and letters of recommendation from their commanders.

To be chosen, Soldiers must have an outstanding record in their units as well as demonstrate musicality, movement, stage presence, and versatility.

Soldier Show artistic staff, U.S. Army Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Command directors, Soldier peers, and selected senior Army leaders form an audition panel that screens all entries. In addition to being scored by a panel of judges on showmanship, talent, and poise, the finalists must pass physical training and drug tests, uniform inspection and a dance audition. Audio and lighting technicians are selected based on their military and civilian theater experience and training, recommendations, and military record.

Once selected to the cast, the Soldiers are attached to FMWRC for duty with the U.S. Army Entertainment Division for the duration of the tour. The Soldier Show operates as a deployable military unit under the military leadership of the Army Entertainment Detachment's first sergeant and under the artistic leadership of the Soldier Show's artistic director.

Soldiers are expected to adhere to military physical fitness, deportment, and appearance standards. Soldiers in the cast and crew are assigned specific military responsibilities and show duties commensurate with their rank in addition to their functions and responsibilities within the show, such as vocal director, dance captain, wardrobe/costume manager, technical

crew chief and stage manager.

The new cast and technical crew spend six weeks at Fort Belvoir, Va., in intensive rehearsal under the direction of a civilian artistic staff.

Twelve to 16-hour days begin with a military formation and include aerobic workouts, vocal coaching, dance training, and learning how to assemble and dismantle the stage trusses. The technical crew learns computer-based lighting, audio, and video functions as they design the show's lighting, sound, and special effects.

In addition to learning choreography, performers memorize as many as 40 songs ranging from country, R&B, gospel and rock, oldies, soul, patriotic songs combined in solos, duets, group and high-energy, fast-paced production numbers that make up the 90-minute show.

Once on the road, Soldiers work an average 14-hour day, seven days a week for seven months. Totally self-contained, the cast and crew off load, load, assemble, and dismantle 18 tons of equipment at each stop on the tour, including four miles of cable and 100 theatrical lights. During the tour, they handle more than a million pounds of electrical, sound, stage and lighting gear. Some Soldiers have described it as their toughest duty outside of combat.

Military drivers with commercial licenses rotate shifts driving a 44-passenger bus, two 18-wheel tractor trailers, and a 15-passenger van to transport personnel, staff, costumes, and stage equipment to their stateside destinations.

The Soldier Show is not funded with taxpayer

dollars, but with non-appropriated funds generated from business programs of Morale, Welfare and Recreation and with generous corporate sponsorship.

The modern version of the U.S. Army Soldier Show originated in 1983 as an outgrowth of several shows existing in various Army commands, with Soldier talent selected from worldwide competition. In 2008, the Army is celebrating the 25th anniversary of the modern-era U.S. Army Soldier Show and the 89th birthday of the first Army Soldier Show that debuted in 1918.

The motto, mission and philosophy of the show – "Entertainment for the Soldier, by the Soldier" – were established during World War I by Sgt. Israel Beilin, a Russian immigrant better known as Irving Berlin. He conceived and directed the first Army Soldier Show, "Yip Yip Yaphank," which appeared on Broadway in 1918.

The headquarters of the U.S. Army Entertainment Division at Fort Belvoir, home of the U.S. Army Soldier Show, was dedicated to Berlin and named the Irving Berlin Center Oct. 30, 2002.

The U.S. Army Soldier Show was reinvented during World War II on Broadway under the title "This is the Army," which was written, directed and produced by Berlin. The cast and crew were members of U.S. Army Special Services Company No. 1. The 1943 film version featured a military cast starring Ronald Reagan, Gene Kelly, and Joe Lewis.

Spring sports season ends on positive note for young teams

Staff report

Boys Soccer

Record: 4-2-1 during the regular season; 1-2 in the European Championship Tournament.

"I think that we got better week after week which is a positive sign," said coach Shawn Rodman.

"At times, we looked like we were starting to play really well. A set back that we had was the number of injuries we suffered toward the end of the season."

"Because of the injuries, we never got in sync as a team prior to or during the European tournament. Many of our players will be back next year and I hope they continue to grow and get better."

Team roster: Danny Cavanaugh, Nic Doimguez, Chris Fisher, Kayleb Harp, Lucas Hoss, Anthony Hunt, Damion Odum, Shaun Redden, Augusto Rivera, Gary Robertson, Lucas Salerno, Tim Salerno, Mike Tillberg, Stephen Vandal, Thomas Welch.

Girls Soccer

Record: 4-3 during the regular season; 2-2 at the European Tournament.

"We are losing a number of seniors and a few starters from the team, so next year will be a bit of a re-building year. We look forward to the challenge," said coach Kathlene Clemons.

"Four girls, Loisann DeLass, Sunny Petery, Allison Deane, and Joyce Rollins were selected

to the All-Region Team for Region IV which includes Patch, Vilseck, Bamberg, and Ansbach. Sarah Adams and Samantha Oberlin were named to the Second Team. This is a major accomplishment since only 22 girls were selected overall from more than 100 players throughout our region."

Team roster: Allison Deane, Hannah Smith, Joyce Rollins, Lois Ann DeLass, Sunny Petery, Jamie Cox, Jillian Reynolds, Alicia Moczynski, Emily Mittag, Lacy Wells, Kristi-Rene Welch, Melissa Caples, Jackie Stone, Ashley Deane, Sarah Adams, Ashley Walbroehl, Nina Cox, Jessica Walloch, Emily Adams, Samantha Oberlin, Brittany Merriweather, Rachael Borg, Maddy Helbling, Stefanie Collins.

Track

"We have a middle school team and a high school team. The middle school team was very competitive at all their meets," said coach Joyce Dusenberry.

"We had two new middle school records set. DeVore Hicklin ran a 12:00 second 100 meter dash and Marisa Warren ran a 67:00 second 400 meter dash. We participated in six regular season meets and Europeans."

"High school students participate in the regular season meets to try and meet the qualifying standards that earn them the right to participate in the European Championships."

"The following high school team members earned the right to compete at the European

Championships in Wiesbaden May 23 and 24: Colby Baskins in the high jump, long jump and 100 m dash, James Robinson in the 100 m and 400 m dash, Leon Atkins in the long jump and Angelica Henry in the high jump."

"The boy's team placed third overall in Division III and Colby Baskins jumped 6'2" which won him the DoDDS European High Jump Championship."

Team roster: Teia Atkins, Colby Baskins, Sam Nwoga, Natelie Reed, Brianna Tolbert, Stephanie LaRumba, Sam Loveless, Julia Nwoga, James Robinson, Patrick Akuna, Sarai Orozco, Vanessa Wells, Leon Atkins, Sabrina Barnett, Marlena Buchanen, Donovan Coleman, Amanda Guthrie, Niko Harris, Angelica Henry, Drew Martin, Christina Robinson, Thalia Astello, Terri Atwater, Jonathan Bufford, Milan Espinosa, Anastashia Garcia, DeVore Hicklin, Lana Hollis, Cody Martin, Brandi Reed, Marisa Warren, Tahtiana Williams, Madison Burke, Kat Harp, Natascha Harris, Terchelle Hicklin, Harley Hunt, Tashia Golson, Victoria Lonnecker, Alexis Perryman, Shaina Ruiz, Essense Warren, Christy Wood.

Softball

Record: 4-7 in the regular season; 2-3 during the European Championship.

"We were a young team this year and this was the first year ever Hohenfels High School fielded a softball team. The girls learned a lot about each other and the great game of fast pitch

softball," said coach Billy Henry.

"During the championship our record was 2-3; they were all very close games which we lost by one or two runs. We won third place in the small school division which is very impressive considering the fact that half of the team had never played softball until now."

"I am sure we will be a contender next year. Mandy Lavanway received an All Tournament award. All Region awards went to Mandy Lavanway and Joeslyn Ruffin, with Honorable Mention to Shaniece Ruiz and Artasia Hall."

Team roster: Kimberlee Akuna, Precious Carter, Jessica Feltz, Artasia Hall, Kimberly Howard, Tanisha Knight, Mandy Lavanway, Joeslyn Ruffin, Shaniece Ruiz, Kayla Starnes, Jane Weber, Jazmine Calhoun.

Baseball

Record: 2-7 in the regular season; finished 4th in the European Tournament.

"We had lots of young players, we were a young team," said coach Darren Mesch, who won the Coaches Award at the European Tournament.

Mesch said by the end of the season the team was really improving and internalizing what they had been working on throughout the year.

Team roster: Miguel Chesnut, Ryan Dougherty, Chris Elliot, Corey Ezra, Carlos Laboy, John Leon, Ryan Matheson, Johnnie Mesch, Steven Orona, Russ Starnes, Randy Taylor, Matt Thorne.

What's Happening

Grafenwoehr/ Vilseck Briefs

Vehicle registration changes

Vilseck vehicle registration has new office hours. Effective July 8, the office will be open Tuesday through Friday 8 a.m. to noon and 1-3 p.m. This includes services for registering a new vehicle, non-operational registration, renewal, transfer of title, deregistration, and PCS or ETS clearing. No temporary plates will be issued in Vilseck, and no cash can be taken. For more information, call 476-2626 or CIV 09662-83-2626.

Estates claim

Anyone having claims on or obligations to the estate of CPL Mixon, Justin R. of 1/2 SCR must contact the summary court martial officer, 1st Lt. Ken Grace at DSN 475-9150, or e-mail at ken.grace@eur.army.mil.

Customs office closure

On June 25, the Grafenwoehr and Vilseck Customs offices will be closed from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. The offices will be open with regular business hours June 26 as follows: Monday – Thursday: 8 a.m. - noon and 1-4 p.m. and Friday: 8 a.m. - noon and 1 - 3 p.m.

For more information call DSN 475-7249 or DSN 476-2106 or visit our Web site at www.hqsareur.army.mil/opm/customs.htm.

MPD reduced staffing

The military personnel department will be at a minimum staffing do to training June 27 from 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Service for ID Cards and Passports will be at the office in Grafenwoehr Bldg. 244 room 134. Vilseck Passport and ID card will be closed on that day; customers are referred to the Grafenwoehr office. Please call DSN 475-6550/6526 for questions or concerns.

Tours for expectant mothers

Are you expecting and wonder, "Where do we go to deliver our baby?" "What do I bring to the hospital?" "Do I need my own towels and P.J.'s?" "Can I get an epidural?"

Get the answers to these questions and many more! New Parent Education and Support Program invites you to join us on hospital tours offered just for our American service members and their families.

The tours are given in each of the three hospitals, Klinikum St. Marien, in Amberg, St. Anna Krankenhaus, in Sulzbach and Klinikum Weiden. All tours are given in English by the knowledgeable klinikum obstetric staff.

These tours are designed to help

families feel more comfortable and become familiar with the unique experiences offered by each of the hospitals. Participants are encouraged to come with questions to ask throughout the tour.

Tours meet in the lobby of each hospital 10 minutes prior to the scheduled time. Dates and times for these tours are available through ACS and occur approximately every two to three months.

Call CIV 09662-83-2650 or CIV 09641-83-8371 for information or to register for a tour.

Get correct running shoes

There will be a running shoe clinic at the Grafenwoehr PX in the shoe department Saturday from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The Grafenwoehr Health clinic's physical therapy department will have tips on preventing injuries and selecting the right running shoes for your feet.

Michelle Scott, DPT, will be present to assess your feet and determine the most appropriate shoe for your foot type and level of activity. During the clinic, participants will be able test running shoes on a treadmill. Contact Michelle at DSN 475-5645 for additional information.

Is your life affected by someone's drinking?

Al-Anon is an anonymous fellowship of family and friends of alcoholics. The Lois & Company Al-Anon Family Group meets Thursdays at 7 p.m. in Grafenwoehr, Bldg. 206 and Sundays at 12:30 p.m. in Vilseck, Bldg. 322. POC Ann CIV 09662-702-575 or CIV 01511-590-5090.

Grafenwoehr and Vilseck Health Clinics new hours

As of June 1, the clinic hours are:

- 6:30 a.m. – 6 p.m. Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday
- 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Thursday
- 6:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. Friday
- 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Training Holidays (scheduled appointments only)
- closed Saturday and Sunday

Hohenfels Briefs

U.S. citizenship class

Are you foreign born and interested in U.S. citizenship? You will be excited by this important multi-session program that will cover American holidays, history, culture, a review of the application process, a mock naturalization interview, a sample naturalization test and much more. We will meet tomorrow in the Yellow Ribbon Room, Bldg 10 from 8:30 to 10 a.m. Contact Eva Garrett, Mobiliza-

tion & Deployment Manager directly at DSN 466-2081 for further information.

Money and moving

Help for you and your family to financially prepare for moves. What steps you should take to get ready financially for your next move. Even if you are not shipping out immediately, start preparing your family financially by planning for it today. Save money and have a smoother move, sounds worth the time tomorrow from 9 to 10 a.m. at ACS, Bldg 10. For further information, Contact Rachael Sosa, Financial Readiness Program Manager on her direct line at DSN 466-3401

Country Western to come to Hohenfels

June 19: The Department of the Army Entertainment presents Brian Stace. This high gear, Country Western artist and his band take the stage in Hohenfels at 7 p.m. at the CAC, Bldg. 40. For more information on Brian, check out his Web site at www.brianstace.com.

Babysitter's training class

The next babysitter's training class for youth ages 11-15 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. is tomorrow. The cost is \$25. After taking the class, teens ages 13 and older may join the CYS babysitter referral program with parental consent. Call Red Cross at DSN 466-1760 for more information or stop by Bldg. 335 to reserve your slot and pay for the class.

Family fun Friday nights

Family picnic involves sitting together for a family meal. This family activity Friday will initiate many venues to help establish this important routine at home. This partnership program allows the families of USAG Hohenfels a seamless system to spend time together even when their children are enrolled in different CYS programs. Call Barbara Tenant at DSN 466-4707 or Kristin Jacobs-Schmid at DSN 466-2822 for more information.

CPR-First Aid instructor class

If you want to become a Red Cross CPR and First Aid instructor, the next course is coming up in Vilseck. Students must attend all four sessions to be certified. Cost is \$95 per student. Session times are: Friday, 4:30-9:30 p.m.; Saturday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; June 27, 4:30-9:30 p.m.; and June 28, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Call Red Cross at DSN 466-1760 for more information or stop by Bldg. 335 to reserve your slot and pay for this class.

Wood shop safety

In this class Saturday, you will learn to safely use the machinery in the wood shop. Once you are certified you may come back for help on individual projects. \$10 class fee and no pre-sign up required. Wear closed toe shoes and appropriate clothing. 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

CAC bus trip to Prague

See the city featured in recent mov-

ies, including "Mission Impossible." The city tour will show you the Charles Bridge, the Astronomical Clock and many more famous sights. Find out why Prague is known as the Jewel of Europe. During your free time in this beautiful city, you can wander through the markets in all the major squares. Cost \$40 for adults and \$20 for children ages 3 to 12. Departs Hohenfels at 6 a.m. Saturday.

Mountain bike trip Saturday

U.S. Forces Europe Mountain Bike Championship Series Saturday: Come out and participate in the Hohenfels portion of the series. Cyclists don't have to participate in all the races in the series. Even if you don't enter any in the series, you are still eligible to compete in the Championship at Garmisch Sept. 27-28. Helmet is required and the event is open to all U.S. ID card holders.

For details and the entire race schedule contact Bill Craven at bill.craven1@us.army.mil or go to www.mwr-europe.com.

Lil' Jon in Hohenfels

The Dept. of the Army Entertainment presents Lil' Jon. This is a don't miss show as Lil' Jon and his crew of crunk rappers bring their one-of-a-kind, Southern hip hop to Hohenfels Sunday at 7 p.m. at the CAC, Bldg. 40. This is an adult entertainment show and admission is free.

Upcoming TAP workshop

ACAP is offering an overview of the civilian job search process including: self-assessment, planning, resumes and cover letters, job search strategies, networking, interviewing and negotiating job offers. Workshop scheduled in Hohenfels June 24-26. 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. first and second day and 8:30 a.m.-noon on the third day. Workshop located in Bldg. 856. Call ACAP at DSN 476-2055 and sign up to attend.

YS football camp

Youth Sports is hosting a Tackle Football Camp with NFL players for children ages 7-12 years old June 27-29. The camp will be held at the high school football field, is free to the youth that are enrolled in CYS and have a current sports physical on file. Enrollment for this event will be held at CLEOS, Bldg. 10A. Reserve your spot today. For more information call Youth Sports at DSN 466-2488/2558/2479.

Marriage retreat

The Hohenfels Family Life Chaplain will be providing a Marriage Retreat at Edelweiss Lodge and Resort in Garmisch July 27-29.

This retreat is for Soldiers and their spouses from Hohenfels. The retreat is paid for by Strong Bonds dollars, and provides for transportation, lodging and meals (except for lunches).

Unfortunately, child care for children under the age of 5 cannot be provided due to limited openings at Garmisch's CDC. Sign up will be on a first come – first serve basis.

To sign up contact the Family Life Coordinator Dawn Glynn at DSN 466-3473.

Beginning crochet

There are many techniques and styles in crochet. Come to this class and learn how to begin. The class will make a Granny Square and dish cloth. Come back later to add skills or get help on your project. Class fee is \$10 plus supplies. Bring your own hooks and yarn if you have them. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. June 28.

Summer lunch series

Come one, come all, to our Summer Lunch Series. The group meets on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to noon at the Hilltop Chapel Center, Bldg. 6 through July 29.

Join the group for Bible Studies on Demand featuring a different women's speaker on DVD each week and a great time of fellowship. DVD lessons are independent of each other so feel free to pop in any time and check it out.

If you're new to Hohenfels, consider making PWOC your new home. Bring a bag lunch; drinks will be provided. Child care on-site is free for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years, and older children are welcome to join the group for the videos.

For more information, contact Kathy Wood at kathywood1@hotmail.com.

Join new fitness group

S3 - Step, Strength & Stretch Fitness Class New, free fitness class. Meets Mondays and Fridays, 5:30-6:30 p.m. in the Post Gym Basketball Court. Men and women of all fitness levels are sure to enjoy and benefit from the S3 mix of cardio, toning & flexibility. Just bring your water, a towel, and a willingness to work out.

Middle C fitness class

Join the free lunch-time "Middle C" fitness class on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 12:00 – 12:45 p.m. in The Zone, Bldg. 150. All fitness levels will enjoy this rhythmic, low-impact, head-to-toe workout bringing harmony to your life and enhancing overall health & fitness.

Summer reading program

It's that time of year again. June kicks off the summer reading program at Turnbull Memorial Library. SRP is designed to motivate kids to continue to read all summer in order to earn prizes and recognition. The theme for the SRP this year is Catch the Reading Bug, so expect lots of creepy crawlies and winged wonders to come to call.

Sign up runs until June 20, with the program itself running from June 25 to July 30 on Wednesdays. Ages 3-5 meet at 10 a.m., ages 6-8 at noon, and 9 and up at 2 p.m. Volunteers are always welcome and needed for this popular program.

The end of SRP party will be held on Aug. 1 at 2 p.m. in the field across from the library and is for participants in the SRP and their families. Make reading a habit for your family. Catch the reading bug. For more information call the library at DSN 466-1740.

Are you a Certified MSF RiderCoach living in Europe?

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Contact: Dana Steward, dana.steward@eur.army.mil

USAG Grafenwoehr Healthy Skin Training

**Grafenwoehr Theater:
25 June 10-11:30AM**

**Vilseck Theater: 25
June 2-3:30PM**

**For Local Nationals,
Civilians, and Soldiers**



Water
Moisture

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des Bundes



Courtesy photos by Paul Wegner

Werneck Castle, built in the 18th century and now an orthopedic hospital, is a jewel of baroque architecture and invites visitors to stroll through its famous gardens and pay a visit to its chapel.

Werneck: Germany's hospital in a castle

by KATHY BROUSSARD
Special to the Bavarian News

Balthazar Neumann is a well known name in Bavaria as the architect and engineer who made the Wuerzburg Residence what it is today. Another one of his castles is located 20 kilometers from Schweinfurt, in a small town called Werneck.

Werneck Castle, finished in 1755, was the summer residence of the prince bishop of Wuerzburg. Today the exterior of the place still looks like a stately castle. However, the interior was turned into a psychiatric hospital 100 years later in 1855 by Dr. Bernhard von Gudden.

For those who are German history buffs, you may recognize the name Dr. von Gudden. After doing such a splendid job of transforming Werneck Castle into a hospital, the doctor went on to further medical acclaim.

Dr. von Gudden became the personal psychiatric physician to King Ludwig II. It was his king that finally broke the purse strings, and patience of the Bavarian peasants by building the famous Neuschwanstein Castle. One evening, on a walk, both King Ludwig II and the doctor met with an untimely and suspicious death by drowning in Lake Starnberg.

Today, Neuschwanstein is one of the most recognized, most photographed, and most visited castles in Europe. The smaller Werneck Castle is now considered one of the most beautiful orthopedic hospitals in Germany.

Driving out to Werneck from Schweinfurt on B-19 takes you through rolling green fields with wheat, corn, and sunflowers.

Charming old farming villages line the way where shops, houses and town walls come right up to the road. You have to be careful winding your way through these villages, sometimes dodging a farmer's tractor or parked wagon here and there.

To reach the castle, you walk across a bridge, and over the old moat, before passing through the wrought iron scrolled gates, where acres of cobble stones lay in front of you.

While walking the expansive court yard, it is easy to get lost in a dream about days gone by, and what life was like during the time of the prince bishops. Faintly, I begin to hear the clip clop of horses' hoofs pulling a carriage through the cobbled court yard. I can almost feel myself clothed in a long dress suitable for the times.

Before long I am standing in front of the main front entrance. It is a high 15-foot wooden double door,

where I have to reach up over my head to pull the door handle, and push it open.

True to the Neumann architecture, I am greeted by an entry way and short flight of stairs. The stairs are easily managed because the steps are shallow but deep, and I imagine my long full dress swaying ever so gracefully.

As I reach the top of the stairs, I feel my dress fading away, and I am back in my street clothes.

Yes, this is a hospital and like no other that I have ever seen, with its grand arches and wide hallways. And this is where some of the Schweinfurt Army Soldiers and their families have come for their orthopedic needs.

While going for medical treatment is never fun, at least this castle, now a hospital, will keep your mind occupied with what life was like in former times.

You can gaze out the windows that are surrounded by four-foot thick stone walls, and think of the days when the court was here, having picnics and summer boating parties on the lake behind the castle.

So if medical treatment is needed at Werneck Castle, it can be made into an interesting experience, filled with thought of history, architecture, and what days were like in former times.



The park of Werneck Castle features a wide array of artistically arranged flower beds in the style of English gardens. Exotic flowers and a beautiful lake offer many opportunities to take a break and enjoy the park's beauty.

A stroll through the park is not only pleasant and relaxing, it will also take you back into the times of the Wuerzburg bishop and his famous architect Balthasar Neumann, who designed the castle and oversaw its construction in the middle of the 18th century.



The gorgeous chapel of Werneck Castle which built from 1733-45. Neumann's love for curved lines can be seen in the chapel's entire construction.

Johann Balthasar Neumann - star architect of the Baroque

Staff report

When Johann Balthasar Neumann was born Jan. 27, 1687 in Eger (Czech Republic) nobody knew that he would become one of the baroque period's leading architects.

After studying to become a metal worker and engineer in Wuerzburg, Vienna and Milan, he was appointed architect of the Bishop of Wuerzburg in 1719.

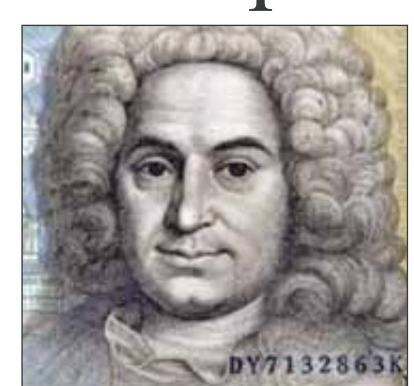
In 1720 he was put in charge of constructing the bishop's new palace which earned him worldwide fame as it was modelled after the French king's palace in Versailles.

Every year, tourists from all over the world visit Wuerzburg to see the bishop's palace and its famous staircase.

Soon he was appointed to head the bishop's construction office and from 1733-45, Werneck Castle was built under his leadership.

As an architect, Neumann fell in love with rotundas and curved lines. His staircases and churches reflect this architectural preference and made him become the baroque era's most famous architect.

The chapel of Werneck Castle is no exception. When visiting Werneck, make sure you pay it a visit.



After an exemplary career, Neumann died 1753 in Wuerzburg where he was buried in the Marienkapelle (St. Mary's Chapel).

Spouses show off their Soldiering skills

by RONALD H. TOLAND JR.

Bavarian News

Griffin Spouses Combat Day or Operation Better Half, began with a bang May 5 when Chief Warrant Officer 4 Ted Tomczyk, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade delivered a spirited in-brief. Tomczyk was also responsible for setting up the event.

With a "Hooah" from about 110 highly motivated spouses, the straining events of the day kicked-off.

By signing up for Operation Better Half, spouses volunteered to be a Soldier for a day.

The event was set up to provide participants a better idea of what their Soldiers experience in training. Combat and self defense training, paint ball grenade toss, litter carry as part of medical training, a 50-question hands-on test, a crate climb competition, tug of war, an obstacle course, a rucksack relay, and paint ball were part of the day's training program.

Conducted at the Urlas training area, each participating spouse received a safety briefing and a set of orders. Every spouse was assigned to a team and group and had to report to their perspective drill sergeants.

After a brief instruction on "about face" and various other commands and more or less successful attempts to obey, each drill sergeant and cadence-calling team of spouses were on their way to master the first task.

"The brigade is sponsoring this event on behalf of the spouses which allows them to come together, come together as a team, as partners--while their husbands are deployed--allowing them to share this experience together,



Photo by Rabia Nombamba

From left, Sarah Conners, Tamara Kisinger-Yolo, Pamela Zottes, and Shari Brown prove their strength during a tug of war competition that was part of Operation Better Half, held June 5 at the Urlas training area.

and in some small part, have fun and understand some of the things that their husbands do in the military," said Lt. Col. Guy Zero, 12th CAB rear detachment commander.

"It is an esprit de corps and camaraderie building event."

According to Veronica Martin, 12th CAB Family Readiness Support Assistant who coordinated all non-military logistics for the event, the

concept worked.

She explained that events like the combat day are perfect to bring spouses together and to get to know each other. They are a chance to meet, to form teams, to bond as a complete unit in a competitive environment, and with it comes a big sense of pride in getting involved, explained Martin.

"There are a lot of women who normally don't participate (in Family

Readiness Group events) and this is good for them - that they get involved today. It gives them an idea of what their spouses do and epitomizes being the better half," Martin said.

"We are there for their support and this gives spouses a way to have a taste of what the Soldiers go through since not all spouses have been in the military," she added.

Zero added that the day's events

provided an opportunity for spouses to better understand their Soldier.

"Any little bit where they can have that connection (to their deployed Soldier) is important and they value that--they are getting a taste of the rigid training we go through," Zero said.

"With all the different teams, (the judges) are consistent and fair with the judging and not letting them off the hook easy. The spouses are motivated, standards are tough, the ladies are tough, and they are really go-getters.

"The motivation started off strong and it is staying strong," he said.

Kelly-Anne Thompson was a participating spouse on group three, the "Krusaders."

"I love it. The camaraderie between spouses and seeing what our husbands have gone through before, their training, and to be able to experience that, and hang out with friends, it is so exciting," said Thompson.

For 12th CAB FRG leader Leslie Edens, the rear detachment's and community's support are unparalleled.

"This is an incredible event. It takes a community to do something like this and that is what is so great about it--the Soldiers, Rear D...even though they are stretched, they helped out. There are 60 cadre here today that are helping, and that speaks volumes," she said.

"Mr. Ted Tomczyk did a phenomenal job; the spouses are having a blast! It demonstrates to us that the community and its leadership value us enough to do something like this ...What it translates and what it says is that we matter," said Edens.

Savusa celebrates Asian Pacific month at Illesheim

Story and photo by RONALD H. TOLAND JR.

Bavarian News

Impressive dances, music, lots of food, and guest speaker Command Sgt. Maj. Iuniasolua T. Savusa, United States Army Europe and 7th Army command sergeant major were on top for the Asian Pacific Heritage Month celebration May 30, at the Flightline, Illesheim's dining facility.

Celebrating the Asian Pacific Heritage helps educating, according to Savusa.

"The fabric of this nation is built from immigrants who traveled afar because of the promise: wealth and to be able to be who you are, dream big, and to achieve successes.

Many of the people that make up the nation are from different countries of the world, even in our military, and everyone needs to appreciate that—the different languages and cultures—that make up this country; and a ceremony like this helps educate others to the culture from all over and around the Pacific realm representing the Asian community," said Savusa.

For Sgt. 1st Class Kimberley Bradford, Equal Opportunity Officer for the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade, celebrating the various different heritages that make up the United States is about honoring the contributions that all ethnic groups made to the nation.

"The United States is a diverse community where all different people from different walks of life come together and coexist.

We need to recognize the great contributions Asian Pacific Americans have made to this great nation. We do not want to overlook or forget those, as well as any other ethnic group contributions," said Bradford.

Accepting that there is not a single standard and to recognize differences is what it's all about, according to Bradford.

"Our nation is accepting to everything. We are not one standard and we do not discriminate against other cultures, so we set aside a time to recognize our differences," she said.

"At the end of the day, we are all human beings and it is all about treating each other with dignity and respect," added Savusa.



Leaiseiga Temese of the Samoan community of Katterbach and Illesheim dancers and performers, performs a spirited dance as Command Sgt. Maj. Iuniasolua T. Savusa joins in at the Asian Pacific Heritage luncheon, in the Illesheim dining facility May 30.

GO TEAM ARMY!



Photo by Ronald H. Toland Jr.

Pfc. Marlaina Cutter leads the rest of the 2008 U.S. Army Soldier Show crew in emphasizing their working motto of "entertainment for the Soldier, by the Soldier" with an up-tempo Army rally song June 4 in Katterbach.

"This has been a real morale booster for our community and could not have come at a better time since we are coming up on the end of a long deployment," said Lt. Col. Tammy S. McKenna, garrison commander.

About 150 attendees were present during the hour and a half long performance, which included a variety of songs ranging from traditional American patriotic and Army theme songs to '40s classics, and current day popular songs that everyone knew and sang along to.

American, German soldiers compete for coveted marksmanship badge

**Story and photo by
RONALD H. TOLAND JR.
Bavarian News**

It started out with American and German soldiers alike coming out early on a Saturday morning to compete in the combined Schuetzenschnur shoot at the Oberdachstetten firing range May 17 and concluded with a award ceremony June 6.

"The Schuetzenschnur (program) is a joint fellowship program between the U.S. and the German Armies to gain familiarity with each other's weapons and qualification tables of those weapons," explained Sgt. 1st Class Shane Podraza, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade Safety Officer and range noncommissioned officer during the event.

For both American and German participating soldiers, passing the qualification portion of the Schuetzenschnur event allows them to wear the marksmanship badge of the other's army during their turn at firing American weapons.

For American Soldiers, however, Podraza said is it more than just another metal badge and a silver rope on a uniform.

"The American Soldiers proudly wear the German marksmanship on their Class A uniform as a symbol of the joint operation and cooperation between the two countries," he said.

But it was also about fun and fellowshiping.

"I came about setting the Schuetzenschnur because it basically was a morale booster, something for the Soldiers in the rear who did not go downrange, and something to look forward to—it was also my last great thing I would do for the unit before I leave the Army," said Sgt.



Spc. Patrick Ullrich assists German soldiers in qualifying with the M240B machine gun during the SchutzenSchnurr qualifying competition May 17 at the Oberdachstetten range near Illesheim.

Jeremy Willard of the 12th CAB during the marksmanship event.

Award recipient and team leader Spc. Ian Moss of A-228 Infantry out of Grafenwoehr echoed a very similar sentiment.

"It is all about esprit de corps for me, community relations, foreign relations...it was just a fun event. I was more than happy to come out on a Saturday and shoot some guns, teach people how to shoot some guns, it was a great

bonding experience with the German Army and I made some good friends too," said Moss.

For Staff Sgt. Peter Plagens of the German Air Force Reserve, it was a great overall training opportunity for his soldiers but he also appreciated the opportunity of personal exchange.

"This was a good opportunity for us to practice our weapon and language pronunciation skills, to learn the weapon systems, names, their parts, ammunition, and how to properly pronounce them. In addition to that (practice on weapons), to exchange information in general—where the Soldiers have been deployed (to), what they are doing next, that sort of thing," said Plagens.

Forty-nine U.S. and nine German soldiers received the coveted award during a ceremony at the Von Steuben Club in Katterbach.

But the event means more then the reflection of soldiers weapon skills.

"The ability of both armies to work together in rear support operations provides a vital bond and link that continues during forward combat and peace-keeping operations," explained Podraza.

"The Schuetzenschnur is a mark of professionalism as a marksman with the (M-16 rifle) and the (9 mm pistol), and is also an opportunity for our German partners to qualify with same weapon to earn the U.S. badges.

"It is a way to exchange and interact with our host nation partners and extend that in other areas besides host nation relations.

"It is a small event, but it's important and part of the overall effort we are working with our host nation in a cooperative way," summed up Lt. Col. Guy Zero, 12th CAB rear detachment commander during the award representation.

Soldiers get front row seat at high school graduation

**Story and photo by
Sgt. 1st Class CHRIS SEATON
Task Force XII PAO, MND-B**

Micaela Cardoza beamed as she stood in her blue cap and gown at the Ansbach, Germany, high school graduation. She couldn't help but smile as a teacher read Micaela's message to her family and friends.

"I want to thank my mom, Miriam, and my dad, Elias, for always supporting me and being there through good and rough times," the teacher read. "I will always be thankful for all your hard work and support."

A few thousand miles away, in a conference room in Iraq, Sgt. Elias Lantigua, Micaela's dad, choked back tears.

"I got a little emotional ... more than I thought I would," said Lantigua, a member of Headquarters and Headquarter Company Task Force XII from Boston, Mass. "Once she said my name I couldn't help it."

Lantigua was one of a few Soldiers

in the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade to watch their kids take the stage - courtesy of the Department of Defense Dependents Schools, U.S. Army Europe, and the 5th Signal Command in Germany.

Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Irvin, a production control specialist in 2nd Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, watched from another darkened conference room at Logistical Support Area Anaconda as his own daughter, Trista, crossed the stage.

"I'm glad I could see it," he said. "Of course I want to be there, but it's nice to see it. I talked to her this afternoon as they were getting ready to go. I'm very proud of her."

"I think it's very positive," said Lt. Col. Richard Crogan, the deputy commander for Task Force 49 and 12th CAB Soldiers stationed at LSA Anaconda. "It's a great morale boost being able to see your child go across the stage. It's the next best thing to being there."

This is the fifth year that parents of

students in Germany have been able to watch the ceremonies from Iraq. The recorded ceremonies are also available online for parents to watch later if work schedules kept them from seeing it live.

Lantigua, who said he was skeptical about how he would feel watching from so far away, spent most of the ceremony waiting for glimpses of his daughter. He excitedly pointed her out to friends assembled in the room when she appeared on screen.

"I was able to participate in something that, just a few years ago, I didn't think was possible," he said. "For that short time, I actually felt like I was there, and that I went through this with them."

After the 12th CAB wraps up its 15-month deployment in September, Lantigua and his family will travel to Boston where Micaela plans to speak to a recruiter about joining the Air Force.

"I'll be with her for that," he said. "It's important to both of us ... she



Sgt. Elias Lantigua, a member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force XII, smiles as his daughter Micaela takes the stage during her graduation ceremony in Ansbach, June 7.

wants me to be there, and I want to be there for her."

And for one important hour on a Friday night in June, he says he was there for her.

"After seeing the picture and the big screen, the feed was so good, I felt like I was actually in the audience," he said. "I probably had a better seat than most of the people there."

Local military history museum ties training area to pre-World War II era

**by RONALD H. TOLAND JR.
Bavarian News**

Military history buffs may be interested in learning that the Muna Museum for military history in Franconia is located near the Oberdachstetten firing range, in Marktbergen.

The museum houses local U.S. exhibits from the pre-World War II era through present-day, with the newest addition being a Battle Dress Uniform donated by Lt. Col. Donald Fallin, who was the commander of the 3-159 Aviation Brigade from June 7, 2006 to April 3, 2008.

The BDU was introduced in 1981 and is currently being phased out by the Army and replaced with the Army Combat Uniform.

According to Markus Bach, one of the museum's volunteer curators, the Membership Corporation of Franconian Military History was established in May 2001 and currently

has over 70 members.

Although the museum was built in 1936, Bach explained that they did not have a display until about a year later.

"The first exhibition started in 2002 in the buildings of the Muna (Hauptmunitionsanstalt) right next to the Oberdachstetten rifle range.

"Today it is called the Muna Museum; but in the past, it was the biggest ammunition factory in the south of Germany—producing mainly ammunition for the 8.8cm Flak, an Anti Aircraft Gun, with over 3,000 employees, having their own school for kids, child care givers, and several canteens," he said.

"Our membership corporation takes care of the last building from that era and built it up to a museum, which gives an idea about what was based there and in Illesheim."

The main goal is to collect and attract as many German and American military items as possible, and they are

constantly looking for new exhibits, according to Bach.

"Our target is to expose all collected items of military history from WWII, German Bundeswehr, and the U.S. Army. We use old uniforms, equipment, and vehicles," Bach said.

"Once a year, the museum opens to the public. The first opening, in 2002, we had over 1,000 visitors and in following years an increase of over 3,000 visitors in one day."

The most recent exhibition was June 15. The entrance fees were raised to help support and keep the museum running.

"All American military members are welcome to visit and see our big collection and get ready for a time journey back to 1936," Bach said.

The museum opens on request for groups any time during the year. For more information or to set up for a group visit, call CIV 09845-783 or e-mail Friedrich Wittmann at wittmann.muna@t-online.de.



Taking it up a notch

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Walter Collins

Residents of Bldg. 5930 in Katterbach proudly pose in front of their home shortly after a building of the quarter sign was set up. Among three other buildings in Katterbach, Bldg. 5930 was identified as building of the quarter, along with Bldgs. 5914, 5916, 5936, 5080, and 5093 after the results of an inspection conducted May 27.

"The program is designed to motivate the building coordinators, Soldiers, and family members to go the extra mile, and make sure their building is the best and that's what the residents of Bldg. 5930 do," said Sgt. 1st Class Walter Collins, who is responsible for the Building Coordinator Program.

Sky Soldiers keep Bayonet out of black

by Staff Sgt. BRANDON AIRD
173rd ABCT Public Affairs

Six Soldiers work around the clock at the ammunition point on Forward Operating Base Fenty in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan, to supply Task Force Bayonet with ammunition.

The Soldiers from Alpha Company, 173rd Brigade Support Battalion, work day and night to move ammunition to International Security Assistance Forces working in Nuristan, Kunar, Laghman and Nangarhar Provinces.

Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne), 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment (Airborne), 4th Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, and the 173rd Special Troops Battalion, all rely on these six Soldiers for their ammunition.

The Soldiers also help supply elements from the U.S. Army Special Forces, other government agencies, Army National Guard, Marines, and Air Force.

Supply and demand in the area is extremely high, according to Staff Sgt. Dana Green, a Soldier in Alpha Company. In one day, over 200 tons of ammunition was recently pushed to numerous forward operating bases.

"Units in our AO (area of operation) tend to go through ammunition really fast," said Spc. Matthew Harvey, a Soldier in Alpha Company. "Just one

fire fight can leave the guys black (short) on ammunition."

Artillery, rockets, mortars, small arms and machine gun ammunition are accounted for and delivered by Alpha Company. Alpha Company conducts sling loads, hot loads (loading ammunition onto a helicopter while the blades are spinning), and convoys to help get the ammunition across an area the size of Maryland.

"We've had our forklifts break on us, but that didn't stop us from completing the mission," said Green, "No matter what, you're going to get the ammunition. Even if we hand load it onto the helicopters."

The small team of Alpha Company Soldiers worked long hours and in extreme conditions to keep the ammunition flowing. In September the entire ammunition point was flooded. Heavy ammunition crates were hidden under brown murky water.

"We had to get a water pump to get all the water out," said Chief Warrant Officer David Fabuman, Alpha Company, 173rd BSB.

Even with the long hours and extreme conditions, the Alpha Company Soldiers stay positive about the mission.

"We do a lot of work, but this is a critical part," said Green. "The units we're supporting really appreciate what we're doing for them."

"I've gotten coins, certificates,



Courtesy photo

Soldiers from Alpha Company, 173rd Brigade Support Battalion load ammunition onto a Chinook Helicopter on Forward Operating Base Fenty in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan. They are responsible for supplying an area the size of Maryland with ammunition.

even a buck knife from guys who are happy to be getting this ammo," said Harvey, who's from Littleton, Colo.

Alpha Company has been in

Afghanistan for 14 months and since September has handled over \$23 million worth of ammunition.

In the next few months Alpha

Company will hand over the ammunition point to Soldiers in the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division.

Return of 173rd inspires brainstorming at meeting

IMCOM Europe press release
with contributions by TRECIA A. WILSON

In preparation of this summer's redeployment of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team from Afghanistan, representatives met in Schweinfurt May 5-7 to develop a standard model of excellence in services, for possible future Army and garrison-wide implementation.

This effort is being made in conjunction with the Army Family Covenant announced in October to provide 173rd warriors and their families with maximum equity and accessibility to redeployment-related programs and services regardless of the community to which they return.

With that in mind, Bamberg community members are encouraged to complete any tasks

that may be impacted by the return of troops causing delays and long lines for everyone during the reintegration process.

Areas affected the most include health and dental clinic appointments, legal and tax offices, motor vehicle inspection and registration, the bank and credit union as well as school registration, housing, SATO travel, CAC/ID card office, Child Development Center, School Age Services, and ACS offices.

Putting off completion of business in these offices will result in a delay of services for you as well as for our returning Soldiers and their families. Please plan ahead and get all your errands completed as soon as possible.

RESET, one of Four Army Imperatives, and the basis for the pilot program, should establish a balanced process following extended

deployments that systematically restore deployed units to a level of personnel and equipment readiness permitting the resumption of training for future missions.

"In addition to fixing and replacing and upgrading our equipment and training for future missions, we also have to revitalize our Soldiers and families by providing them the time and opportunity to recover from the cumulative effects of sustained operations," said Army Chief of Staff Gen. George Casey when he announced his four imperatives in October 2007.

Garrison and IMCOM-Europe representatives from public works to MWR and public affairs, brainstormed key tasks and developed integrated approaches in creating a model that participants are hopeful will be a benchmark for any RESET operations involving any unit and any garrison.

These efforts were augmented by representatives of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team's rear party and the European Regional Medical Center.

"Today's Army Family is dramatically affected by operational tempo, and we're excited that the lessons of this pilot ensure the needs and concerns of all audiences impacted by the 15-month redeployment cycle are foundational planning factors in the RESET process," said JoAnn Chambers, IMCOM-Europe chief of staff.

"Through this groundbreaking work, we're able to assure the redeploying unit that IMCOM-Europe and garrison support structure is fully cocked and ready to deliver a consistent level of excellence of support regardless of where a unit is in the RESET process."

541st Engineers test infantry skills

by 2nd Lt. ROBERT ETHERIDGE
Special to the Bavarian News

The Outlaws from the 541st Engineer Company proved this past weekend that they are not limited to their Sapper skills.

At the 22nd Annual Lombardia Competition in Palazzago, Bergamo, Italy, Soldiers tested their infantry skills against competitors from all over Europe. The countries represented at Lombardia included Austria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Latvia, Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the Italian hosts.

The hosts put together an amazing event. The rugged 26-kilometer course was quite a challenge. At one point, it rose over one vertical kilometer, but the scenery made it worth the climb. The event started Friday afternoon with one of each team's four members shooting at a target with an air rifle.

The targets were tallied and were used to determine the start time for each team. The best shooters were given the advantage of going first to keep from being held up at one of the thirteen stations on the route.

The stations ranged from adjusting mortar fire to employing the Italian-made Milan anti-tank weapon.

One of the more interesting stations consisted of setting up a bivouac site on the side of a mountain late Friday night. Soldiers were able to get a little bit of sleep after tying their rucks, and in some cases themselves, to the trees located on the slope.

Saturday morning started with a weapons station where each team was able to shoot the Benelli tactical shotgun and the Italian version of the M-9 pistol. The Americans once again proved their shooting skills, finishing in the top four in the pistol station.

Saturday continued the climb into the mountains and through some small

local villages. It rained throughout much of the day but fortunately there were a couple of times where the teams were able to peek through the clouds to see the beauty of the Italian countryside.

After a day of rappelling, conducting urban combat in a small village, providing first aid, and land navigation, the teams finished, tired but excited about completing the tough course with enough time for a hot local meal.

The teams awoke Sunday a little bit sore but enjoyed an excellent awards ceremony where the national anthem for each participating country was played. There were several awards given by Italian generals and local politicians. The ceremony finished up with some picture-taking and mingling with the foreign soldiers. Finally, the Outlaws packed their bags and headed back to Bamberg after a difficult, but very memorable weekend.



Staff Sgt. Enoch Dixon, Cpl. Jason Oja, Staff Sgt. Lee Patterson, 2nd Lt. Robert Etheridge, Spc. Kyle Keiser, and Pvt. Lawrence Hays stand by the finish point after completing the grueling Lombardia Competition in Palazzago, Bergamo, Italy.
Photo by 1st Lt. Kevin Burke

Kids send flag to Soldiers

by TERRI HOFSTETTER
Special to the Bavarian News

Bamberg community library and high school Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps partnered in a children's project to create a flag for the 173rd Special Troops Battalion.

"The flag will be sent to (Forward Operating Base Fenty) Afghanistan where the Brigade Support Battalion will fly it as a token of our defense of freedom. The BSB is vital to the logistical support of the Sky Soldiers. Timely logistics are critical to the success of our mission. It is fitting that they keep guard of this flag. The flag will return with our deployed Soldiers and be returned to the children. This flag represents the charge of our nation to defend freedom at home and abroad," said Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy Weatherspoon of 173rd STB.

The flag was created as a Memorial Day project to give children a chance to be involved in the deployment and to make a connection to Soldiers deployed.

As a volunteer program, the Bamberg High School JROTC cadets led a story time with a Memorial Day theme and created the flag afterwards, according to Maj. Madonna Roberts, JROTC instructor. About 30 children listened to a Charlie Brown story, "What Have We Learned?" and "The White Table", a children's book about Soldiers missing in action.

"These books are a great way to present military history in a way children can understand," Roberts said.

Kylee and Justin Copeland, ages 6 and 3, children of Capt. Corbin Copeland, rear detachment



Photo by Trecia A. Wilson

Jasper Smith, 6 years old, places his hand prints on a sheet with the aid of JROTC Cadet Pvt. Sara Bookout during the Bamberg Community Library flag project.

commander of 173rd BSB, presented the flag to Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy Weatherspoon. JROTC Cadets Sgt. Jana Julian, Pvt. Sarah Bookout, Pfc. Chris Kirk, and Maj. Erick Suarez conducted the ceremony. Over 30 Soldiers of the 173rd STB and BSB were present to receive the flag.

Karen Lazzeri, Bamberg library manager said that the cadets explained the process well and the children were very excited about the project.

"They only wished they had more flags to paint," she said.

Wuerzburg schools close doors for good

Story and photo by MARK HEETER
USAG Schweinfurt CI Chief

The area between the Wuerzburg elementary and high schools was turned into a street party June 6, a bittersweet occasion marking the closure of the Wuerzburg American Elementary, Middle, and High Schools.

"Closing these schools will not take away the memories or connection to each other," said Debbie Strong, elementary school principal, addressing the crowd of students, staff, friends, and alumni who reached back into the 1960s.

Mike Thompson, superintendent of Department of Defense Dependent Schools Bavaria, began by recognizing the uniqueness of the Wuerzburg students who just completed the school year, bringing an end to more than 50 years of Wuerzburg American schools.

"Your effort, unity and working together have been very positive," said Thompson, who listed off the school closures he has seen in 18 years in Germany, paralleling a dwindling military population in Germany.

Diane Ohman, DoDDS-Europe director, amplified Thompson's remarks, referring to the 40 schools that have closed during her tenure and enrollment numbers that have dropped.

"The intensity, feeling, and emotions that go along with closing 40 schools is pretty intense," she said.

Wuerzburg students and schools have always been critical components in theater-wide events and programs, from honors band to the academic contests, Ohman said.

"I am here to tell you that, through the years, Wuerzburg has always been well-represented," she said.

"These schools have turned out some of our nation's best and brightest. And like most people, these children of yesterday and today continue to look back on their junior and senior high school days as some of the best times of their lives," said Lt. Col. Anthony Haager, U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt commander.

Referring to milestones and events from 1954 – the year Wuerzburg American High School opened – Haager drew similarities to students in 2008.

"Our military children still love a good song and a good book. And those children continue to receive the same quality and excellent education that they did back then," he said.

Following the retirement of the flags that flew over both schools, the elementary and middle school choruses led the crowd through "Forever Friends."

Then, in a final act, the members of the Wuerzburg schools' family released a rainbow of balloons over the sky in a city that meant so much to so many students over the past 54 years.



Members of the Wuerzburg High School Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps retire the colors that flew over the Wuerzburg Elementary School at the schools' closure ceremony June 6.

Leighton tributes Asian Pacific American heritage

**Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. JOHN QUEEN**
69th ADA Public Affairs Office

The community activity center on Leighton Barracks in Wuerzburg was alive with the sound of South Pacific island music May 30 as more than 100 members from the small military community there turned out to honor Asian Pacific American Heritage month.

The event was a festive celebration that showcased an array of unique sights, sounds, and tastes from several Asian Pacific nations.

"They put on a great presentation," said Spc. Joseph Bonner, a generator mechanic from Headquarters Battery 69th Air Defense Artillery Brigade. "It kind of gave you that feel of being on a tropical island, and you got to see an aspect of a culture that we don't learn too much about."

The grand ballroom of the community center was bejeweled with a tropical flare of long grass bunting, tiki-torches, bright colorful flowers, and seashells.

Guests were treated to an ensemble of traditional South Pacific dances, a Guam warrior "stick battle," fire twirling, and a spread of Asian Pacific food that was topped off with a roasted pig.

Command Sgt. Major Iuniasolua Savusa, U.S.

Army, Europe's command sergeant major and a native of American Samoa attended the event as the guest speaker.

"I am an American Samoan – but above all I am an American and a Soldier," he said during his speech. "I embrace my identity in hope that others will learn to embrace and cherish our inherent diversity."

In his speech, Savusa talked of the trials and tribulations faced by members of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, an Army unit composed of Japanese Americans that served in Europe during World War II. He told of how the Soldiers overcame racism and prejudice to become recognized as the most highly decorated units in the Army. He also explained how the pride and valor of the 442nd, both in and out of battle, became the lifelong inspiration for one young man that would become the forerunner in the transition and modernization of today's Army, retired Army Chief of Staff, Gen. Eric Shinseki.

"It is my sincere hope that as we celebrate Asian Pacific American month that each and everyone citizen will reflect on our nation's unwavering heritage and appreciate the relationship between all racial and ethnic diversities that unify the freedom that binds us all together as Americans," Savusa said.



With a sway to the left and a sway to the right, Charlene Sanchez-Licciardi instructs Command Sgt. Maj. Iuniasolua Savusa in some of the finer points of the hula dance.

ASAP, safety team up to keep summer safe for Soldiers, civilians

Story and photo by MARK HEETER
USAG Schweinfurt CI Chief

Barbecues, fests, and fun in the sun. Summer is on the horizon, and the U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt safety office and Army Substance Abuse Program aim to keep it safe this year.

"We know there will be a lot of barbecues, a lot of fests, and a lot of daylight where people are going to be out and about. And there will be a lot more drinking," said Gerry Warner, alcohol and drug control officer.

"For us, our focus is on substance abuse," she said.

To kick off the "101 Days of Summer" campaign, ASAP brought in comedian Bernie McGrenahan who completed a three-day tour in Schweinfurt talking to community members about the dangers of substance abuse.

Safety and ASAP officials have coordinated an attack on drunken driving, passing out single-use breathalyzers as well as advice.

"We have enough to provide one breathalyzer for each Soldier," said Andrea Dowdy, program assistant, adding that the handouts are well-used by local units.

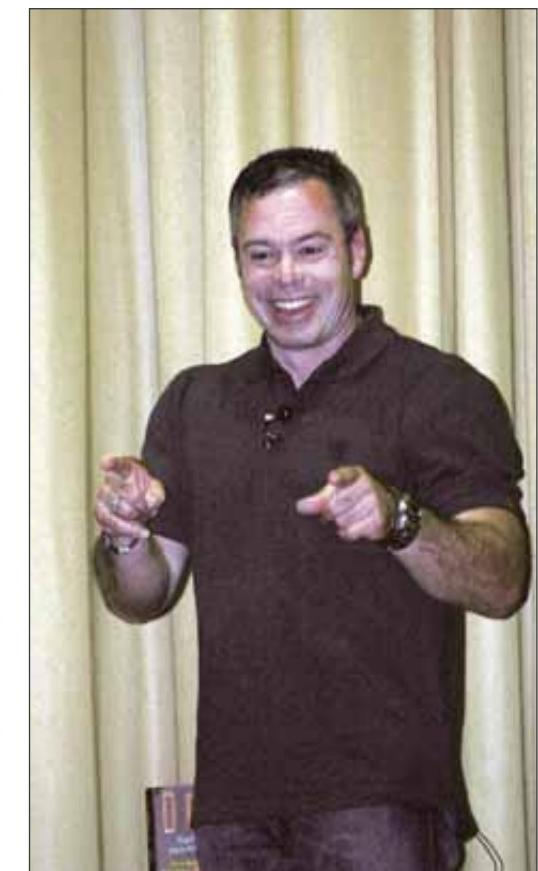
"It's very important for them to make up their minds up front how they will get home," said Eddi Sauer, USAG Schweinfurt safety officer, adding that some people are fooled into thinking they can drive after drinking.

"You might think it might be okay, but it isn't okay. It's that little bit that makes the difference," he said. "The good thing is that there is very good public transportation available."

"They may think the cab is going to cost them a lot," but the price of a cab ride is no comparison to the penalties for drunken driving, Warner said.

One important reminder from Maron Yusuf, ASAP risk prevention manager: People under the age of 21 are prohibited from driving with any trace of alcohol in their blood.

A concentrated effort is underway to target



The Army Substance Abuse Program brought in comedian Bernie McGrenahan to talk to the Schweinfurt community about the dangers of substance abuse.

training and prevention where units need it the most, according to Yusuf.

"You look at incidents quarterly and you put it together to highlight any issues that units might be having, and you target your prevention efforts at their needs," he said.

New bus service takes Soldiers, families to Grafenwoehr

by SANDRA WILSON
Bavarian News

Now there is an easier way to get to Grafenwoehr to do business. Schweinfurt Department of Logistics Transportation office has instituted a bus route between Schweinfurt and Grafenwoehr available to all I.D. card holders.

The intent of the route is to provide an easy and cost-free mode of transportation to Soldiers and family members who are in the process of moving to Grafenwoehr, according to Hubert Guggenbichler, transportation officer.

"If you have business to do up there, you can

use it if you are an I.D. card holder," he said.

The brigade move to Grafenwoehr has called for multiple trips to Grafenwoehr for some Soldiers and families. The shuttle service was created for just that purpose.

"We're really excited about it. It's another example of the USAG Schweinfurt supporting the brigade move to Graf," said Maj. Maurice Alsing, 172nd Brigade logistics officer. "The Soldiers and family members can see the facility they're moving to (and) don't have to use their own POV (privately owned vehicle)."

The bus routes are funded by the U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt and provided primarily for Soldiers and family members. Civilians are

allowed to use it on a space-available basis.

"Taking care of Soldiers is top priority. Funding-wise, (the garrison and the brigade) are from two pots of money; whenever we can work together, it's a victory," said Alsing.

There are three pick-up points in Schweinfurt: Ledward main bus stop, Askrone commissary, and Conn at the bus stop #2 near Bldg. 40. Two busses, leaving at staggered times, are scheduled to run seven days a week, including holidays. They leave Schweinfurt in the morning, drop off passengers at the Grafenwoehr commissary, and then return to Schweinfurt in the afternoon.

"Christmas is the only day it doesn't run," Guggenbichler said.

The two routes provide "maximum service for the morning and afternoon," Guggenbichler said.

The busses do not allow pets, but there is ample room for baby strollers and car seats. Each direction is expected to take approximately two and a half hours of riding time.

The service can also be used by Soldiers and family members already in Grafenwoehr, provided that they don't mind spending the night in Schweinfurt to catch the bus back the following day.

For a bus schedule, call Transportation Motor Pool at DSN 353-8481/8386 or CIV 09721-96-8481/8386, or see posted schedules.

Last graduation, 54 years of education

Story and photo by SANDRA WILSON

Bavarian News

The Mainfrankensaele near Wuerzburg was a bustle of excitement the evening of June 5 as family and friends waited for the arrival of the graduating seniors on the boat reserved specially for them.

Shouts and waves welcomed them onto the dock as the students debarked and paraded along the river promenade to the ceremony hall.

The class of 2008 had a particularly notable graduation this year because it was the very last for Wuerzburg American High School before the school officially closed its doors the following day.

"It's truly a sad day to say goodbye to a school we've loved so much," said Principal Walt Seely at graduation.

To reminisce over the past, a special picture slideshow of the seniors' baby years was shown as a surprise gift to the graduates. Following the photo show, many of seniors stepped up to the microphone to share their high school experience and thank their family, friends, and teachers.

"The time we have spent mastering our school subjects means nothing without friendships," said senior Amanda Whitney.

"I learned that we could accomplish anything that we put our mind to," said senior Carly Sipes, salutatorian.

The 24 seniors received their diplomas, turned their tassels, and tossed their caps to celebrate the ending of a season and to mark the beginning of a new chapter in life.



Graduates Lisa Little and Miranda McConnell excitedly watch the graduation ceremony with junior attendant John Reynolds. The class of 2008 is the last to graduate from Wuerzburg American High School.

Summer camp brings seasonal changes to SAS

by KIMBERLY GEARHART

Bavarian News

Schweinfurt School Age Services kicked off summer camp programming Monday. Kids in the program will explore Camp Olympus, in honor of the summer Olympics being held this year. But before children can enjoy the cycling, volleyball, baseball, and swimming fun, parents must attend a camp orientation, held every Tuesday at 10 a.m.

"We do things a little differently during summer camp. Payments change, and are made weekly, rather than on the

first and the 15th," said Bobbie Jones, Schweinfurt SAS director.

In order to reserve a space for your child in the summer camp, parents must pay the weekly fee by Thursday of the week prior. Failure to do so can result in a late fee of \$5 or possibly missing out on that week of camp.

When attending orientation, parents are asked to sign permission slips for field trips and indicate which weeks their children will attend.

"Signing the permission slip does not guarantee a space for the week. To do that, you must pay for that week,"

Jones cautioned.

Hourly care is available during summer camp as well, at a rate of \$3 per hour. All Child and Youth Services patrons with children in first- through fifth-grades are entitled to five hours of free monthly care. Patrons whose sponsor is deployed and those in Warrior Transition Units or Wounded Warrior status can receive additional care hours.

"The important thing with hourly care is that parents can only use it two days per week and that we need at least 24 hours notice," Jones said.

Additionally, unlike weekly

payments, which include entrance fees for field trips, parents of children in hourly care must pay entrance fees when dropping off their children.

SAS will be open from 5:45 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, as usual, during summer camp, although camp activities will, for the most part, run between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

"If that changes, like if a field trip needs to leave earlier, we will post notices in advance," Jones said.

During this week's orientation, parents expressed concern about keeping track of so many children

on field trips to places like the zoo or a fun park. Jones assured parents that children are well-advised of plans, and that staff is diligent about accountability.

"But if you're worried, come out on the first field trip with us, and see for yourselves. You'll have to pay your own entry fees, but we'll pack you a lunch," she said.

For more information about the summer camp program, contact SAS at DSN 354-6974 or CIV 09721-82181, or stop by Bldg. 575 Poplar Street on Askren Manor.

Wuerzburg American High says goodbye to peer program

Story and photo by LINDSEY COLE

Bavarian News

When the lunch bell rings for students at Wuerzburg American High School, it's a time to socialize, eat, or catch up on homework. For the Peer Action Leadership Society, it's a time to make new friends and enjoy a free meal.

The idea, proposed by a parent, spurred on a partnership between WAHS and Schweinfurt and Leighton Child and Youth Services teen centers which resulted in the forming of PALS in 2005. The aim of the club was to help incoming WAHS students meet people and introduce them to what the school had to offer.

"Whether they are coming or going, our job is to make the transition a positive experience. Over time the program has not only become a 'welcoming group' but also has given the students a chance to be involved with their community, school, and have a great social experience at the same time," said Donna Hillyer, coordinator of PALS and director of Schweinfurt teen center.

Parents and faculty know that it's difficult for military children to be moved from school to school and begin a new social life each time.

"PALS has been great, it goes right along with the Military Child (Education) Coalition," said Walt Seely, WAHS principal. The coalition aims to implement programs for the challenges faced by highly mobile military children.

"When I first arrived at the school I didn't know anyone, the first person who talked to me was someone from PALS. It made me feel much more comfortable. The friends I made there have been my friends since," said junior Daniel Soto-Perez, vice president of PALS.

Throughout the school year, PALS activities are sponsored by the Schweinfurt teen center,



Amber Manchester, senior, and Daniel Soto-Perez, junior, decorate the traditional PALS cake during the BBQ May 30.

the Parent Teacher Student Association, and the WAHS student activity fund.

These sponsors also host a traditional end-of-the-year barbecue which is designed to celebrate academic, personal, and group accomplishments of PALS participants.

May 30, the students who attended the barbecue favored the idea of the PALS program being brought to all Department of Defense Dependent Schools.

"It helps a lot of students come together and be integrated. It supports teens through tough times like when our parents get deployed. The volunteers at PALS ... constantly want to help with anything they can. It's a great idea and should be brought to more schools," said sophomore Dianna Bennett, president of PALS.

First-graders form clay artwork

by SANDRA WILSON

Bavarian News

Since the end of April, a process similar to the amazing transformation of caterpillars into butterflies took place in the Schweinfurt Elementary School art classroom. But instead of butterflies emerging from cocoons, clay soap dishes were emerging from a kiln.

In a unit of study on the craft of ceramics, SES students learned how their pieces of clay—shaped, fired and glazed—could be transformed into a beautiful work of art.

"I teach the kids the entire process," said art teacher Angela Oliverson, who is a third generation artist in her family. "(It) can be compared to a life cycle of a morphing animal, such as a butterfly."

The students received their final product after six weeks of work. But the steps involved in reaching that end goal were more than one may suspect.

The first-graders took on the challenge with their fifth-grade mentors and started out with a

lump of clay.

"I've been doing (ceramics) since (kindergarten). I'm really experienced," said fifth-grader Paige Dasalla, explaining how her previous knowledge in the art was helpful in teaching the first-graders.

"My favorite part was slamming the clay on the table to flatten it out so the first-graders could put their hand in it," said fifth-grader Seth Hardy. The handprint in the clay served as a personalized decoration.

After the completion of the clay shaping, the piece went into the kiln and was fired at a high temperature. The uncolored soap dishes came out ready to be patted with glaze.

"It's not just art—it's science," Oliverson said. "You can be creative with the colors, but when it comes to putting them on, you have to follow the rules."

The glaze was brushed on and the soap dishes looked "kind of funky," said Oliverson, but the last firing in the kiln produced the shiny green and white soap dish that the children could proudly take home.

Auf Wiedersehen



Lt. Col. Anthony Haager, U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt commander, presents a rare garrison belt buckle to Justin Mitchell, his deputy commander, at Mitchell's farewell celebration on Conn Barracks June 5. Mitchell, who arrived in Schweinfurt with his wife, Michelle, and their two children in September 2002, heads to the Army War College in Carlisle, Pa.

Photo by Mark Heeter

Submit your story ideas today! Send an e-mail to mail.sft.pao@eur.army.mil.

Behavioral health reaches out to Bamberg

by DUSTY HOLSO-HOLLENBECK and PATRICIA BURR

Special to the Bavarian News

The behavioral health section of the U.S. Army Health Clinic Bamberg supports Soldiers, civilians, and their families in the U.S. Army Garrison Bamberg community. The staff is committed to all people in all phases of their lives including deployment cycles.

The behavioral health section includes the services of community mental health, Educational & Developmental Intervention Services, Family Advocacy Program, psychiatry, social work service, and the Warrior Transition Unit. The behavioral health section works closely with the health clinic's primary care providers to include the physical therapy section focusing on a well-rounded, holistic, and interdisciplinary approach.

The Bamberg community is faced with more frequent deployments. With this challenge, risk of relationship problems, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and mild traumatic brain injury all increase dramatically. Recent military research estimates that mental health issues increase with each deployment.

After the first deployment, 10 percent of Soldiers will experience mental health problems. With the second deployment, 19 percent of Soldiers will experience problems. After three or more deployments, at least one in five Soldiers will have some type of mental health or relationship problems.

According to Maj. Pablito Gahol, Commander of the Bamberg Health Clinic, mental health has become a high priority for senior military leaders, and has been a topic of concern for every unit due to the challenges of deployment.

"If we do not address the Soldiers' mental health issues, we will not succeed in our mission," Gahol said. "Our behavioral health

section has taken a number of steps to mitigate the risks and build support bases for the Soldiers and their families."

The behavioral health section has creatively responded to the unique issues and demands of the unique demands of the Bamberg community. The following services are available:

- Combat PTSD Treatment Groups
- Women's Trauma Treatment Group
- Women's Support Treatment Group
- Life Coping Skills Treatment Group
- Stress/Anger Management Group for DoDDS
- Individual Therapy
- Couples, and Marital Relationship Therapy
- Family Advocacy and Violence Prevention

The focus of the three combat PTSD and women's trauma treatment groups, in part, "address past trauma, primarily battle trauma," according to Sue Kelley, licensed clinical social worker.

These groups focus on the impact of the traumatic event or events including relationship problems, sleep problems, mood swings, guilt, and stress management.

The combat-related group allows Soldiers a means of coping with the physical and emotional reactions to stress often associated with PTSD.

"I believe that group work is one of the most effective ways to help people resolve their problems because it gives them the opportunity to give and receive support from people who are dealing with the same kinds of problems. I think this is especially true for people with PTSD," said Dr. Joseph Simons, Ph.D., Bamberg clinical psychologist.

The staff of the behavioral health section also recognizes that family members experience challenges associated with deployment and have

established several support groups not only for Soldiers, but for spouses and children as well.

The women's support treatment group has become a cornerstone for spouses grappling with the many facets of the deployment cycle.

"Women often neglect their own self care while caring and worrying about their husbands and children. The group allows for a place where their needs are put in the forefront. Friendships are formed and supported here," said Patricia Burr, licensed marriage and family therapist.

Self-esteem, decision making, marital communication, and stress management are major areas of focus for this group. In short, the women's support treatment group provides opportunities for women to connect with other people outside of the unit.

Children are also facing increasing amounts of stress. In response, the behavioral health section providers partnered with DoDDS and the MEDDAC to provide services to reduce barriers to care for school aged children.

"Many parents work and/or have many responsibilities which make it difficult to schedule 'traditional clinic appointments' for these children. This measure allows access to care at the school in a natural environment. We have been working on this for a time and are excited to have it started," said Joseph Pehm, program coordinator for behavioral health.

School personnel have and are most concerned about the impact of deployment on children. The behavioral health section staff helps children deal with the challenges associated with deployments, self-esteem, and peer pressure, together with improved communication skills.

The life coping skills group assists people in the development of skills associated with self-acceptance, developmental tasks, self-direction, problem-solving, communication, and anger management.

"The life coping skills group attempts to assist individuals to tap into their self awareness as to what type of personality and life style they currently have in order to function effectively in society and the military community," said Martha Ricaldi, licensed clinical social worker and facilitator for the group.

Participants usually are referred from the Family Advocacy Program, the Warrior Transition Unit, company commanders, and other clinical staff.

Finally, the behavioral health offers a warrior transition suicide awareness group and WTU S4S group. These groups are process-oriented and are two of the few opportunities where all the WTU Soldiers have a chance to get together to talk and share ideas, knowledge, frustrations, and success.

These groups offer Soldiers a listening opportunity to discuss change, maintain power, addressing transitions, resources, and services as well as to give feedback on those elements which are significantly impacting their lives.

If you are interested in more information about the services and groups of the behavioral health section, call CIV 0951-300-7793 or DSN 469-7793.

- Men's Combat PTSD Group, Tuesdays 1-2:30 p.m.
- Men's Combat PTSD Group, Thursdays 10:30 a.m.-noon
- Life Coping Skills, Wednesdays 9-10:30 a.m.
- Women's Support Group, Wednesdays 1-2:30 p.m.
- Women's Trauma Group, Thursdays 10:30 a.m.-noon
- WTU S4S Group, Monthly
- WTU Suicide Awareness Group, Twice a Month
- Imbedded Adolescent Group at Bamberg DoDDS Schools, Every Week

Clinic commanders explain standard of care

by Lt. Col. TELITA CROSLAND and Col. ALFONSO ALARCON

USAG Grafenwoehr Clinic Commanders

Q. Can the clinic take care of all of my health care needs, including specialty care?

A. The Grafenwoehr and Vilseck health clinics are out-patient primary care clinics. This means that the clinics are capable of providing acute care for minor illness, routine care for chronic illness, and wellness examinations such as physicals. In order to address all the different needs of our patients, we need additional medical resources that the PPN can provide. It would not be possible to have every aspect of medical care available in the clinic. The health clinics do provide some special resources such as physical therapy, optometry, audiology, and mental health. In fact, the physical therapy department at Vilseck is the largest in Bavaria, and the Grafenwoehr Health Clinic recently opened a brand-new physical therapy space.

Q. What is the "PPN"?

A. PPN is an abbreviation for the Preferred Provider Network. Physicians and hospitals in our PPN have a relationship with the military health clinic. They are general physicians as well as specialists in every field, such as OB/GYN, pediatrics, radiology, neurology, orthopedics and oncology. Their medical qualifications

are screened and we make periodic visits to their office or the hospital. As a TRICARE Prime Patient (usually Active Duty Soldiers and their family members) you are eligible to see physicians who are at the top of their field and often the head of their particular medical department. While the clinic or hospital staff may not speak English, most do and all physicians must speak English to be in our network.

Q. Is the German standard of care comparable to the United States?

A. In 2007, the World Health Organization ranked 190 health care systems. Germany's health care system was ranked at No. 25 while the US system was ranked No. 37. The German health care system is as advanced as the U.S. system.

Q. What do I need to do if I am referred to the PPN?

A. Once you and your provider have decided to seek care with our PPN, the provider will enter a consultation request in order to authorize your care on the PPN. You will then need to see our TRICARE benefit advisor located in the clinic. They will counsel you on your benefits and provide you with all the required forms, assisting with the completion of those forms as needed. Our TRICARE team will schedule your appointment and provide you with directions and contact numbers. You will need to take the

required forms with you to your appointment. If you can not make your appointment, it is important to contact the physician or hospital and cancel. You can reschedule without coming back to the U.S. Army Health Clinic for another authorization.

Q. Do I need to pay anything?

A. No, you do not need to pay anything for a clinic or hospital visit if you are a TRICARE Prime patient, usually for Active Duty Soldiers and their family members. The PPN will submit the bill. Should you get a bill for care by a PPN, please bring the bill into the TRICARE Service center for assistance. The TRICARE number for Grafenwoehr is DSN 475-7424, CIV 09641-837424; Vilseck CSN 476-2000, CIV 09662-832000. For prescriptions filled by a German Apotheke, you will need to pay for your medication upfront. TRICARE will then reimburse you for the medication. Prior to filling a prescription with an Apotheke, please contact the TRICARE service center to ensure the medication is covered under TRICARE. If you would like your prescription filled by the health clinic and it is part of the formulary, stop by your health clinic's pharmacy to give the instructions to your doctor on how to fill prescription in American format.

Q. What should I expect when I go to a German doctor?

A. The standard of care in the German health care system is excellent. However, the manner in which they deliver their care may be different than what you are used to in the United States. For example, Germans do not typically use gowns to cover patients when they are undressed; and many German patients do not ask as many questions to their doctors as Americans do. These are cultural differences. If you are uncomfortable, ask for a towel, and make sure to ask your doctors if you need more information about your care.

Q. What are patient liaisons?

A. Patient liaisons are members of the health clinic staff who are fluent in English and German. Their role is to help ease the anxiety of getting care in a foreign health care system. The PL will visit you in the hospital and speak with the German health care team on your behalf. They will assist with your follow-up after discharge and are available to help you complete health related documents that are in German. Although PLs are not health care providers, they are a valuable member of our health care team.

Q. If I have a question or concern about the care I received from a German provider, who do I talk to?

A. See the clinic commander or the patient advocate. If you are in the hospital, our patient liaisons make daily rounds and are available by phone. After hours simply contact the MP desk and they will have the PL give you a call back. My command team is responsible for facilitating care between our patients and our German

partners. We need to hear your concerns in order to address them. We will make an inquiry and respond to your concerns.

Q. How does the health clinic receive feedback on the care provided by the German physicians?

A. There are several ways information is communicated. As a TRICARE patient, you are considered to be a private patient in the German health care system. The physician will often review your results with you, providing copies of X-ray results and a clinical note about the care received. The physician's office sends a report to the health clinic, which the health clinic then sends for medical translation. Medical translation should take no longer than four weeks. The translated clinical note is then scanned into your electronic medical record. For urgent medical issues, the German physician will contact the health clinic directly to ensure that you get the care you need.

Q. If I need to stay in a German hospital, what are the steps I need to take after I am discharged?

A. In most cases, our patient liaison will see you on the day of discharge and ensure you understand your discharge instructions. In Germany, hospitals do not always write a discharge prescription. For our patients, the German hospital or emergency room will provide you with enough medication until you can be seen by your health clinic. If possible, have your German doctor write your prescription prior to your stay and have it filled so that you have medication when you are discharged. Our patient liaison will facilitate follow-up appointments as needed. If you have a question, please contact your clinic for assistance.

Q. If we are sent to Landstuhl or German hospitals for care, are we reimbursed for travel expenses?

A. TRICARE Prime patients will be reimbursed for travel if they are referred to Landstuhl. If you are an Active Duty service member your unit is responsible for generating and paying your TDY cost whether you are the patient or accompanying a family member to their appointment. Family members must pick up a memorandum from your clinic front desk called a "CMA" to take with you to your appointment. Upon return from your appointment, provide the clinic with your signed CMA documenting your appointment and the clinic staff will submit your documents for reimbursement. Reimbursement typically takes two weeks.

If you are referred to a German hospital that is greater than 30 miles from your health clinic and you will be reimbursed under a similar process. The German physician will provide you with a note documenting your appointment. Submit this form to the front desk for processing. Active Duty service members' TDY cost is covered by the unit whether they are the patient or an attendant.

Town hall update

Brig. Gen. Keith W. Gallagher, European Regional Medical Commander, reviews key topics surfaced by community members at the June 6 medical town hall conducted at the Rose Barracks post theater in Vilseck.

For more coverage on issues brought up in the town hall, keep an eye on future issues of the Bavarian News.

Photo by Nick D'Amario



Bavarian garrisons host birthday bashes

by NICK D'AMARIO
USAG Grafenwoehr CI Chief

Col. Brian Boyle, U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr commander, delighted 200 children at the Vilseck School Age Services facility June 13 with the reading of the 233rd U.S. Army Birthday Book written and illustrated by Army Child and Youth Services.

The children, ages 2-12, participate in CDC, SAS, and FCC programs in Vilseck, Grafenwoehr, and Netzaberg.

"It's important that children understand how important they are in our Army Family, and this lets us recognize and express our gratitude for their important role," said Anita Payne-Landgraf, chief of CYS.

During the course of the day, children made birthday cards for their Soldiers and participated in numerous activities to include relay races and a "Why I'm Army Strong" picture drawing – at midpoint they enjoyed lunch and a large birthday cake. The event was organized by the garrison CYS team.

"This is a chance to have children understand they are just as important as Soldiers, and I welcome every opportunity to engage our children and help them understand they are an important part of the Army Family," said Boyle.

This birthday event was preceded by an Army Birthday celebration at the Grafenwoehr dining facility June 12, where a large birthday cake was offered up to hundreds of Soldiers and family members after remarks by Joint Multinational Training Command and garrison leadership.

"These celebrations are an excellent opportunity to tell the Army story and bring together the entire Army Family," said Boyle.

Other Army garrisons within the Bavarian footprint, including the Ansbach, Bamberg, and Schweinfurt garrisons, held similar Army birthday celebrations.



Photo by Paula Guzman

U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Commander Col. Brian Boyle serves cake to Chap. (Col.) Curtis Wells, the oldest attendee at the Army birthday lunch June 12 at the Grafenwoehr dining facility, while Command Sgt. Maj. William Berrios, garrison command sergeant major, serves the youngest attendee, Pvt. Leeann Wolcott of the 615th Military Police Company.

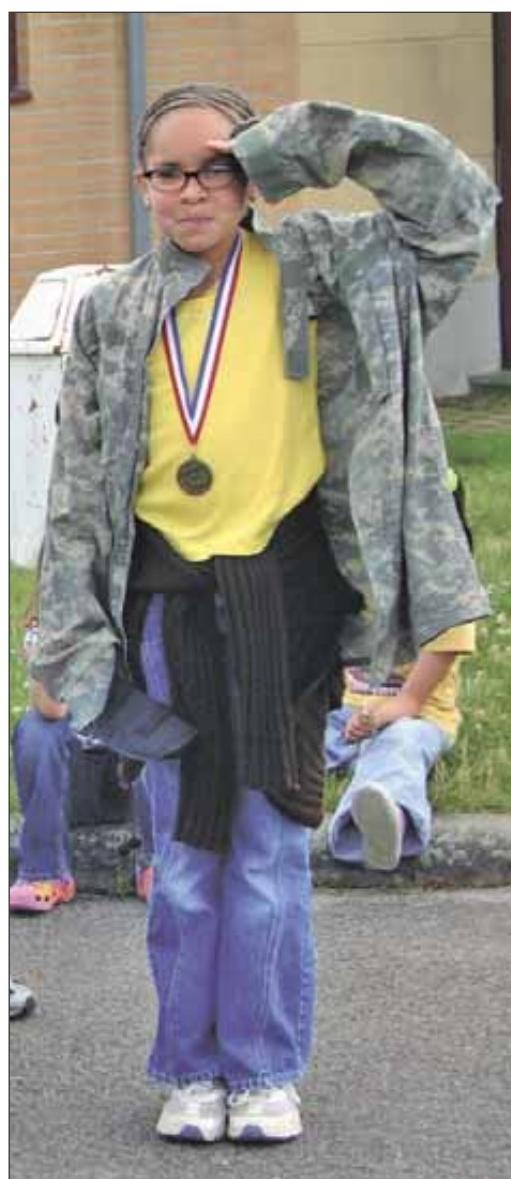


Photo by Ronald H. Toland Jr.

Above: Ava Green, one of the winners of the Katterbach School Age Services' June 12 scavenger hunt, displays her military-related findings.



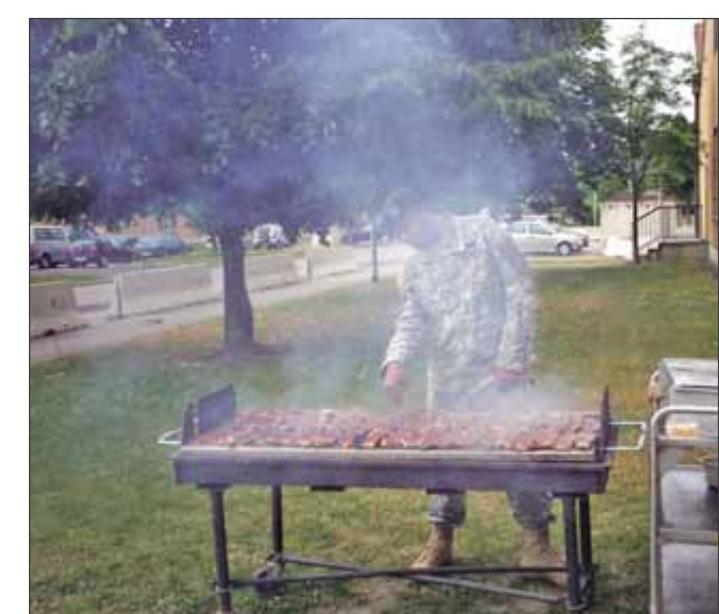
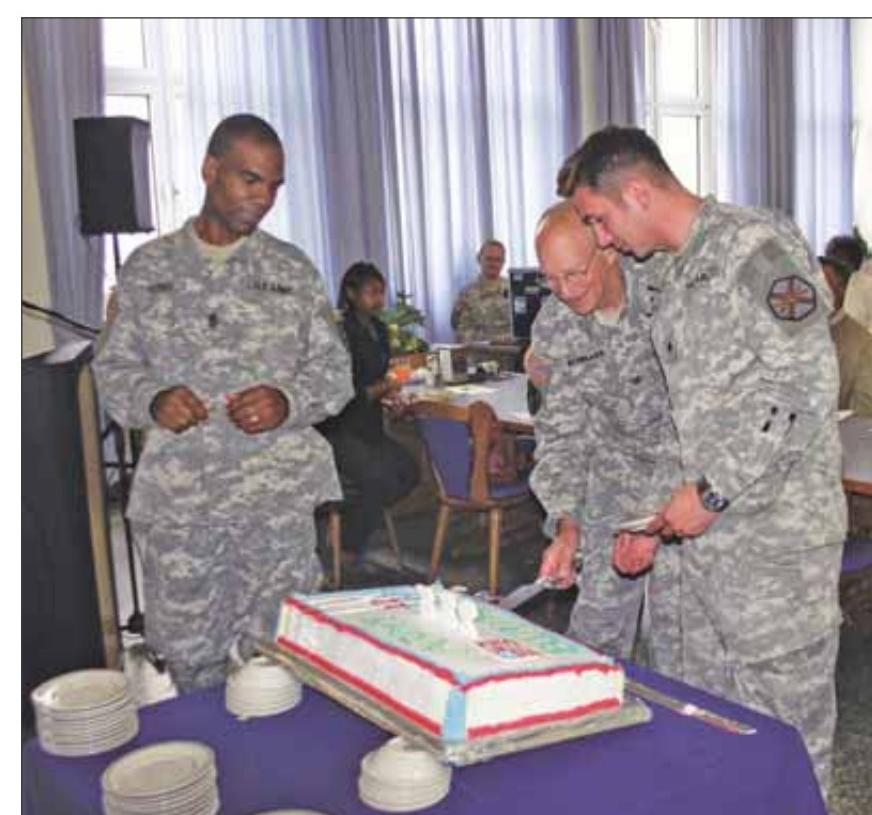
Photo by Trecia Wilson

Carol Rosenberg, wife of USAG Bamberg Commander Lt. Col. Gary Rosenberg, reads at the Child Development Center for the Army birthday. This year, each garrison read the U.S. Army 233rd birthday book to the children of the CDC. The book was written and illustrated by Army Child and Youth Services and contained a foreword written by Secretary of the Army Pete Geren and Gen. George Casey Jr.



Photo by Kimberly Gearhart

Acting Deputy Garrison Commander John McIntyre gets a little assistance cutting the Army Birthday cake from 4-year-old Isis Didymus at the USAG Schweinfurt Child Development Center June 13.



Courtesy photo

Above: The Stryker Inn in Vilseck holds a special Army birthday barbecue for the 2d Stryker Cavalry Regiment Soldiers. The meal gave Soldiers a chance to relax and enjoy a summer tradition while celebrating the Army birthday.

Photo by Ronald H. Toland Jr.

SFAC, CYS get much-needed funding

Continued From Page 1

The additional staffing Mills referred to comes in the form of more Exceptional Family Member Program employees, two deployment specialists, and a two new employees to work the lending closet for the Grafenwoehr and Vilseck ACS locations.

ACS has spent a total of \$298,000 so far in Army Family Covenant funds, and is currently working on a project to build a new state-of-the-art \$7.2 million facility in Vilseck.

Child and Youth Services, another Morale, Welfare, and Recreation program, has also been seeing some major improvements from the Army Family Covenant. Because of the additional funding, CYS is now able to provide \$20,000-worth of free or reduced rate child care per month in USAG Grafenwoehr. This care comes from free registration for families with a deployed sponsor, free hourly care for memorial services, free hourly care for mandatory deployment meetings and mandatory Family Readiness Group meetings, and respite care for families with a deployed sponsor.

Expansions within existing CYS programs include extending weekday hours until 8 p.m., and Saturday hours until 10 p.m.; \$8,000 spent on upgrading Youth Sports equipment; \$25,000 in transportation for YS events; and upgraded homework, computer, and mini-tech labs. Upgrading alone within CYS to meet increased demands on services has cost \$83,000 in Army Family Covenant funds.

Audre Binder, MWR director, explained what all of the numbers mean.

"There is no set dollar amount to cite - funding has been sufficient to meet AFC expectations," she said. "Locally, we have met the goals set forth for installations, (Installation Management Command Family, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation) continues to work some of projects."

Part of the Army Family Covenant provides for increased Soldier quality of life, too, and USAG Grafenwoehr has planned some significant changes on that front. Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers has gotten more funds to allow reduced costs to the

participants for activities such as bowling nights and adventure trips. BOSS will also be involved in hosting upcoming entertainment nights.

MWR has used some of the Army Family Covenant budget to bring more entertainment to the garrison for families. The two most recent are the 2008 Soldier Show and the Lt. Dan Band, which is coming July 6. Other Armed Forces Entertainment programs are in the works, so check with MWR for more listings.

Other than shows, MWR Army Family Covenant money has increased availability of arts and crafts programs and has given the Grafenwoehr and Vilseck libraries funds to purchase reference material applying to deployment, reunion, and reintegration.

While it looks like USAG Grafenwoehr has spent a lot of money so far, many programs are still in the works and will require additional funding. Hogg reassured the community during the signing ceremony by saying that "we will continue to fight for more resources (in) the coming years."



Photo by Mary Markos

USAG Grafenwoehr Commander Col. Brian Boyle, Nanette Bales of the Soldier and Family Assistance Center, and Brig. Gen. David Hogg of the Joint Multinational Training Center cut the ribbon officially opening the Vilseck SFAC June 11.

The SFAC, which did not exist prior to the Army Family Covenant, is funded and staffed by Covenant dollars.

Full Replacement Value saves Army Families money

Continued From Page 1

The program, which took effect in all countries and shipping categories March 1, holds the transportation service provider responsible for all damage accrued during the packing and shipping of goods.

While the old system had the claimant file with the government, the new system has the claimant deal directly with the moving company or TSP. Items are fixed or replaced at the full value, not a depreciated price as done in the past.

"Now, we are holding the carrier responsible for the damage," Vilseck claims assistant Holly Pickerin explained. "Maybe not now, but six months to a year down the line, we're going to see that carriers are going to be very cautious when packing your household goods. They are going to be taking more precautions when packing

items, because now they are held responsible for damaged stuff."

Ed Pontoon, Vilseck claims examiner explained that the new system hastens the process of reimbursement or repair.

"We act as a go-between for the carrier and the Soldier or the Department of the Army civilian. We marry them up and find out what they need to do," he said.

After the TSP is notified of the damage, they negotiate and settle the claim directly with the Soldier or DoD civilian.

Smith, working through her TSP and a local furniture repair company, had all but four items repaired over the course of six weeks.

Her 1956 colonial-style hutch, an anniversary gift from her husband Sgt. Joseph Smith, Headquarters Headquarters Troop, 2d Stryker

Cavalry Regiment, was damaged beyond repair.

"Literally, they did so much damage, it was cheaper for them to pay me for the item than repair it," she said.

Agreeing on a payoff for her hutch and additional belongings involved hours of negotiations.

"I felt like Mohammad Ali fighting for the price of each item," she said.

Smith researched prices and printed photos of similar items off the Internet.

Her knowledge and insistence on receiving a fair price paid off, she said, as she was happy with the end solution. "I got what I wanted and needed for the items," Smith said.

Smith added that individuals preparing for a move should photograph their possessions to

ensure they receive a fair price if a claim must be filed.

"Take pictures of everything," she said.

Pontoon added that receipts are also important in the moving process.

"A receipt shows three things," he said. "It shows what you paid for an item, where it came from, and the time frame it was purchased."

An accurate inventory sheet is also essential in the claims procedure, Pickerin said.

"Make sure you have your inventory sheets. That proves you had the item and that it was delivered here," she said.

For additional moving tips and information on the FRV program, contact your local claims office or visit the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command's Web site, www.sddc.army.mil.

Medal of Honor recipient honored at White House

Continued From Page 1

McGinnis yelled "grenade" to allow his crew to prepare for the grenade's blast. Instead of leaping out the gunner's hatch to safety as he was trained to do, McGinnis threw his back against the radio mount where the grenade had landed, covering the grenade and absorbing most of the blast.

"By that split-second decision, McGinnis lost his own life, and he saved his comrades," Bush said.

Following the ceremony, McGinnis' parents expressed their pride in their son and sadness of their loss. The Soldiers who called him a brother and friend voiced their appreciation for his sacrifice.

"Ross did what he did for his buddies, and actually he's done that all his life," Romayne said. "It didn't surprise us when we found out all the details of what had happened. That was Ross."

When asked how their son should be remembered, the parents spoke about how he was a normal kid, who when called upon, did what he thought was best for his buddies.

"The only thing you've really got to remember about my son is that he did the right thing at the right time," Tom said. "Because his life was very short, it wasn't an exciting story until it got right to the end. He just made the right decision when it was required."

For more on Ross McGinnis' story, visit www.army.mil/medalofhonor/mcginnis.



Spc. Ross McGinnis was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor June 2 for actions that saved the lives of four other Soldiers. For more on his story, visit www.army.mil/medalofhonor/mcginnis.

Garmisch hosts July 4 festival for U.S. Army

Continued From Page 1

in the ICS cook-off.

The festivities will begin with a 5k fun run at 9 a.m., followed by the co-ed softball tournament at 9:30 a.m. A traditional Bavarian beer tapping with VIPs will coincide with the opening of the food booths at 11:30 a.m.

The softball tournament is a special event, said Gauthier. Unlike a normal tournament with three strikes and you're out, each player gets one shot for a strike or ball, then the next player steps to the plate. Think of it like speed softball. The teams can warp through the game while enjoying all of the other ongoing events.

"One of the events is the frozen T-shirt contest," said Gauthier. "The entrants receive a frozen, rolled-up shirt, and whoever can put it on the fastest wins."

Last year the most popular competition was

the beer crate climb. Contestants hooked to an overhead safety line try to remain balanced as they stack crates under them. Eventually the crates add up and begin to sway. The height can be dizzying, and the inevitable fall is as exciting for the onlookers as it is to the contestant.

There are no admission costs or contest entrance fees. The county fair is a USAG Garmisch community effort open to all with military and civilian ID Common Access Cards who want to enjoy the Spirit of '76 in the mountains of Bavaria. Those without CAC cards, like visiting family members or friends, may be signed on post by their sponsor if they bring their passport or German ID card.

AFN will be broadcasting two shows live from a pavilion at the center of the action.

For directions, contest rules, entry forms and general information about the fair, contact the USAG Garmisch FMWR at DSN 440-3702.

Burns retires after 29 years

Continued From Page 3

"Command Sgt. Maj. Berrios has a solid background as a garrison command sergeant major," said Burns, "and has the right skill set to do an exceptional job."

Burns worked closely with Col. Brian Boyle, garrison commander, on a daily basis, who he characterized as "a true friend and boss. A caring, kind-hearted professional Soldier who cares about everybody and everything. He allows people to work with him and not just for him."

May 30, John and Geri Burns flew to the U.S. to spend a couple of weeks with family, including

their son Michael, 28, an Army captain and Signal officer on leave from his deployment in Iraq, and their daughter Kara, 24, a high school English teacher whose wedding they attended June 5.

Burns will be officially retired Aug. 1.

While Burns demonstrated all of the Army values – loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage – he further defined selfless service:

"My career successes are attributable to the quality of people I have worked for and with," he said.

Catch the Bavarian News online at www.milcom.de.

Army in Europe 10-Miler team set

Story and photos by MARY MARKOS

Bavarian News

The top two qualifiers for the Army Europe 10-Miler race held in Grafenwoehr May 31 will be leading a 12-Soldier team later this year during the service's annual premier run.

Vilseck's Capt. Joel Steward took first place in the men's division while Heidelberg's Sgt. 1st Class Lori Nix claimed the women's title, as 117 participants entered the qualification run that determined the six men and women active-duty Soldiers who will represent the Army in Europe during the national Army 10-Miler Oct. 5 in Washington, D.C.

Steward crossed the finish line first overall with a time of 56 minutes, 25.84 seconds. The 33-year-old father of three – who ran his first 10-miler while serving in Mosul, Iraq, in 2006 – was pleased with his time as he battled chest congestion a week prior to the race.

Nix was the first woman to qualify for the D.C. race as she clocked 75:26.32.

The first women overall was Sabine Pullins of Bamberg, with a time of 69:08.

Steward's teammates on the men's team are: Pfc. Jason Williams, Heidelberg (59:36.29); 1st Lt. David Aamidor, Wiesbaden (60:00.55); Sgt. 1st Class Walter Johnston, Heidelberg (61:18.27); Staff Sgt. Christian Cash, Grafenwoehr (63:53.76); and Maj. Paul Ryan, Heidelberg (64:28.89).

Joining Nix on the women's team are: Sgt. 1st Class Melissa Novakovich, Benelux (81:05.66); Lt. Col. Laura Landes, Stuttgart (81:37.16); Capt. Gladys Agilbot, Mannheim (84:50.28); Maj. Sarah Albrycht, Grafenwoehr (93:29.86); and Master Sgt. Carolina Boudreux, Ansbach.

(102:55.02).

Although she has finished four marathons, Novakovich was competing in her first 10-miler this year. "I've run a lot of races," she said. "But I was worried about running 10 miles ... I did not know what pace to run."

U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr Command Sgt. Maj. William Berrios noted the course, which was modified this year to ensure safety and not disrupt the community activities on post, was hilly and tested the runners.

"I'm glad we got the opportunity to change the course," said Tony Lee, USAG Grafenwoehr Morale, Welfare and Recreation chief of recreation programming. "The (new) course saved manpower and provides more of a challenge."

With the additional hills, Lee said, the course is now more comparable to the one that runners will face stateside.

"This course gives competitors a good feel, in terms of where they're at on fitness level," said Stuttgart's Maj. Gen. Ken Keen, who competed at Grafenwoehr this year and has participated in more than 10 Army 10-milers. "It will serve them well in terms of the competition in D.C.," he added.

Steward found the course suited him, as "the first couple of miles are flat and there was a little bit of shade," he said.

Steward, Nix, and their Soldier-teammates will have more than three months to prepare for the national race, where an expected 26,000 runners will assemble for the nation's largest 10-mile running event. The route begins and ends at the Pentagon, wandering past national monuments, the Smithsonian and the United States Capitol building.



Sabine Pullins, Bamberg, takes the overall female honors at the U.S. Forces Army 10-Miler Qualification Run May 31 at the Grafenwoehr Physical Fitness Center. Steward, the overall winner of the race, finished with a time of 56 minutes, 25.84 seconds, and qualified for the national race in Washington, D.C., Oct. 5.



Capt. Michael Steward, Vilseck DENTAC, crosses the finish line during the U.S. Forces Army 10-Miler Qualification Run May 31 at the Grafenwoehr Physical Fitness Center. Steward, the overall winner of the race, finished with a time of 56 minutes, 25.84 seconds, and qualified for the national race in Washington, D.C., Oct. 5.

Vilseck baseball team takes fifth in IMCOM tourney

by KEN STARK

Special to the Bavarian News

The Vilseck Child and Youth Services Bigs (high school age) baseball team participated in the Installation Management Command European Baseball Tournament in Ramstein May 23-26.

Playing four games in four days, Vilseck captured fifth place in a field of 12 teams. Although fielding a young team, including five starting freshmen and one starting sophomore, Vilseck ended the weekend with a respectable 3-1 record.

Vilseck opened the tournament against perennial powerhouse and the eventual tournament winner, Ramstein I. Ramstein scored two runs in the top of the first inning with the first two batters getting a triple and a single, respectively.

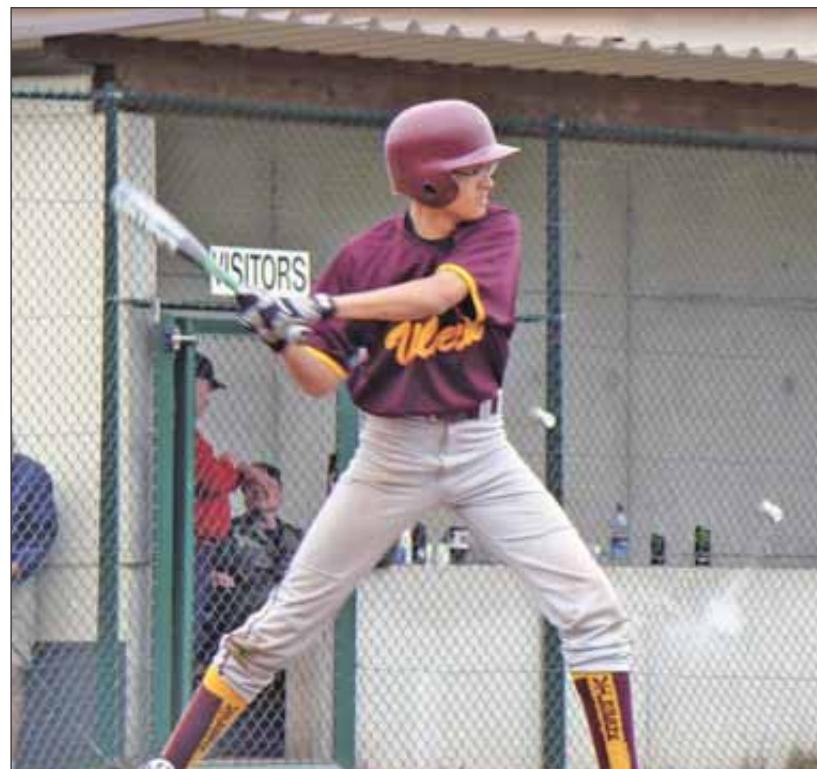
Starting pitcher Kyle Krajcovic then got the next six batters out. At the end of two innings, the score was still 2-0. However, Ramstein opened the game with four runs in the third inning and never looked back. The final score was 14-0.

Chris Nelson pitched the final two innings for Vilseck. Credit must be given to a very good Ramstein team, with a no-hit performance from their pitcher.

Vilseck's young team was immediately eliminated from any chance at playing in the final four tournament bracket.

Not to be deterred, Vilseck next faced Kaiserslautern. Roberto Miranda was given the start and pitched four solid innings, followed in relief by Jarrod Alston.

Miranda also provided help at the plate with two singles. Will Pomares added a single and a double in three trips to the plate. Vilseck scored



Robert Miranda of the Vilseck CYS Bigs baseball team steps up to the plate at the IMCOM-E baseball tournament held in Ramstein May 23-26, where he was selected to the All-European tournament baseball second team.
Courtesy photo

a good Heidelberg team. Krajcovic was a little shaky in the first inning, giving up two runs on just one hit.

Vilseck came right back with a lead off single by Miranda and was followed with a home run by Heriberto Troche over the left center field fence.

With the game tied 2-2 after one and a half innings, Vilseck's first three batters in the bottom of the second inning, Solis, Aaron Jackson, and Chris Nelson all singled and the team went on to score four runs to open up a 6-2 advantage.

Heidelberg kept the game close by scoring runs in each of their last four at bats. Krajcovic was removed from pitching duties with two out in the last inning after he reached the maximum pitch count of 105.

In relief, Miranda inherited a runner on third base and the tying run at the plate. He then proceeded to strike out the final batter and preserve the win for the Vilseck Falcon team.

Due to their outstanding play and contributions during the tournament, both Krajcovic and Miranda were named to the All-European Tournament Teams, first and second teams, respectively.

Krajcovic posted two wins and one loss while batting .400 for the tournament. Miranda was 1-0 pitching and batted .636 for the tournament.

The team finished the season with a record of 10 wins and 3 losses. Individual team honors (as voted by the team members) are as follows: Most Valuable Player – Krajcovic; Teamwork and Hustle – Miranda; Sportsmanship – Nick Stacey.

Team captains were Pomares and Stark. The team will participate in an invitational tournament at Aviano Air Base in Italy tomorrow through Saturday.



Photo by Marilyn Treddenick

Duffers in training

Garmisch golfers took part in the "Swing is the Thing" golf instructional clinic May 14-16 at the U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch Alpental Golf Course in Burgrain. The golfers had just finished the 9-hole scramble of a beginner class taught by Mueller Fitness Center instructor Dale Greenberg (front row, second from left) and volunteer Tim Wood (not pictured).



PLAY BALL!

The Vilseck softball team battles Heidelberg in the Installation Management Command-Europe Junior Championship held June 6-8 in Vilseck. The Bamberg team took the top honors for softball, while Vicenza was crowned baseball champ.

Photo by Mary Markos